DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 475 007 RC 023 893

AUTHOR	Prior, Warren; Mellor, Suzanne; Withers, Graeme
TITLE	The Pacific Islands Project: Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education. Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment. Report 2: Operational Assessment. Report 3: An Educational Framework for the Promotion of Social Cohesion and Democratic Participation in Schools.
INSTITUTION	Deakin Univ., Victoria (Australia).; Australian Council for Educational Research, Victoria.
SPONS AGENCY	World Bank, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	194p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Citizenship Education; Cultural Pluralism; *Curriculum Development; Educational Attitudes; Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Multicultural Education; *Pacific Islanders; *Role of Education; Social Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	*Solomon Islands; *Vanuatu

ABSTRACT

A project sought to develop a general operational framework for the design of a school-based citizenship education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific Island nations. In particular, the project addressed how educational systems in these multicultural societies can forge national identities while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation, and strengthening democratic processes. This document contains three project reports. Report 1 describes surveys of school and community stakeholders in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands concerning cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes. Report 2 presents a review of current school-based practices in the two countries regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation, and social cohesion. Building on the findings of the two reports and on subsequent reflective workshops, Report 3 outlines a framework for development of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" agenda. The framework consists of a set of generic principles and guidelines, which may be useful to Pacific Island policymakers. Following a discussion of findings about social and educational values and important contextual factors impacting education, stages in articulating the schema are described: (1) national educational goals, development of priorities, underlying values and assumptions, impact of global mega-trends; (2) national audit of resources available to education; (3) linking instruction, curriculum, and assessment to national goals; and (4) policy formation and governance. Three national educational priorities are proposed: development of a national youth strategy plan, review of the social-learning curriculum, and devolution of policymaking processes to the community. (SV)

The Pacific Islands Project: Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education. Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment. Report 2: Operational Assessment. Report 3: An Educational Framework for the Promotion of Social Cohesion and Democratic Participation in Schools.

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS PROJECT

PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 1 : Stakeholders' Assessment

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

July 2001

Deakin University

And

Australian Council for Educational Research

This report and the recommendations within it represent the advice and opinions of the consultants. They do not necessarily represent the views of the government officials in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu or of the officers of the World Bank.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

In 2000 the World Bank identified citizenship education as a means of promoting social and cultural tolerance and as one of its priority areas for research particularly in the Pacific region. This indicates a new direction in the activities of the World Bank. In an article reported in The Melbourne newspaper, The Age, *'Taking on the Bank', 7 November 2000,* the new managing director of the World Bank, Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, noted this change in direction, attributing much of this to the recent work of the president of the Bank, James Wolkensohn.

> *What he has done amounts to a revolution. Instead of building big dams, the World Bank's major focus is now on human development, democracy building...*

This project, *Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education*, came at a time when several countries in the Pacific Region were engaged in sometimes bitter inter-racial tensions, resulting in loss of life, the destruction of property, the collapse of the norms of a civil democratic society and the partial or general collapse of their economies.

In late 2000 a research team, centred at Deakin University's Consultancy and Development Unit and the Australian Council for Educational Research, both located in Melbourne, Australia, was commissioned by the World Bank to undertake a baseline study of current stakeholder thinking about the 'good citizen' and education practices in the area of citizenship education. The two case study locations selected were the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In particular, the study was to focus on the role schools could play in promoting social harmony and cohesion in these two countries.

Models of Citizenship & the Terms of Reference for this Project

The Terms of Reference for this project noted:

> *The primary aim of this project was to develop an operational framework for the design of a school-based civic education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific Island nations...*

and that

> *Education systems can play a crucial role in the process of nation building and consolidation. Furthermore, education may be an effective instrument to promote understanding, respect and dialogue between cultures. Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and promoting social tolerance are not simple endeavours; they can be, however, areas for educational action.*

The research team in preparing for this project took these Terms of Reference as guidelines to frame the project rather than as 'authoritative' prescriptions because in many ways these two small sections from the project's Terms of Reference embody the range of issues currently being debated by social educators about citizenship education. In the first statement the notion of 'school-based' might be taken as locating the study directly in schools. It might also be assumed that 'school-based' practices are the appropriate school structural model. To promote this particular model, despite its attractiveness to the members of the research team, in the current worldwide education climate of outcomes-based education systems with increasing centralised control of the curriculum, is to go against the wind of current practices. Curriculum is socially constructed and one would need to be very certain that any particular curriculum model is synergistic with the cultural mores of community in which it hopes to operate. A number of questions were raised by the Terms of Reference.

To what extent do peoples of the Pacific Islands nations embrace the idea and practices of a school-based agenda?

A second issue in the first statement concerns the notion of 'civic education'. A reading of the literature quickly establishes on-going debates about the whole area. 'Civics education' is not the same as 'citizenship education'. The literature usually refers to civics as being the narrower construct, being built around notions of civic knowledge. A second issue raised by the Terms of Reference related to the level of importance given to the acquisition of civic knowledge.

To what extent is civic knowledge, for example, an understanding of a political system, an essential attribute of a 'good citizen'?

On the other hand, citizenship education refers to a much broader construct, of which civics is but a part. Over the years a large number of models of citizenship education have been developed; each of them assigning various attributes or dispositions to the 'good citizen'. One type of attribute which could be included in discussions about citizenship education would be the role of citizens to actively participate in community affairs. A further attribute would be a willingness to demonstrate social tolerance.

A third question arising out of the Terms of Reference extended the role of the good citizen beyond just accepting such social issues as social tolerance to actually taking some action in relation to that social issue.

Are 'good citizens' those with positive but theoretical intentions about social tolerance or only those who actually engage in community's activities promoting social tolerance?

Thus it can be demonstrated that definitions about civics and citizenship education and more broadly, curriculum, are problematic and contestable. They are value-laden constructs. Some writers argue that any accepted definition is the construct of the particular dominant hegemonic group. We need to be able and willing to deconstruct the values and assumptions embedded in curriculum and policy documents in order to effectively audit and clarify the directions we wish to take. Knowing where we have come from is useful in knowing where we would like to go.

The second Terms of Reference statement puts the view that (formal) education is probably the one common experience most members of a society have and therefore its impact is potentially huge in terms of achieving the goals of those who construct the education system. As an instrument of the nation it is potentially very powerful and we have numerous historical examples where nations have marshalled their youth in schools to achieve various goals of the state. The statement also recognises that the power of education to impact on the values and actions of its student are 'not simple endeavours',

It is now well recognised that there are numerous other, perhaps even more powerful forces, that can have a greater impact on young people. The globalisation of world economies and the globalisation of communication, particularly television, have had a huge impact not only at the nation level but also in the daily activities of people. The decline in world prices for fish can, and did, close a national fishing industry. One only has to walk around the streets of Vila or Honiara to see young people wearing 'global t-shirts' and acting in the style of the latest global television star. And while it might be argued that these two towns are not representative of the rest of the country, the observations of the researchers working in most remote locations re-enforced the view that the impact of globalisation has touched the daily lives of most people in both countries. This project therefore posed a question about the ability of schools to teach about values.

To what extent then can schools challenge/counter' foreign' values which appear to be so attractive to many young people?

The second Terms of Reference statement also raised the issue that education 'is an effective instrument to promote respect and dialogue between cultures' and that it can 'strengthen democratic processes'. There is now evidence (Knight, 1999) to suggest that schools are mostly not democratic institutions where students (and teachers) can practice democratic

processes. Furthermore the role assigned to schools with a focus on values education, for example, developing 'respect', 'overcoming prejudice', flies against the world-wide trend in education systems towards a focus on measurable outcomes where the relative importance of values are undermined because of the difficulties of measurement.

Finally, both Terms of Reference statements raised an issue about an acceptance by teachers and education systems of a particular teaching and learning pedagogy, characterised by what might be broadly called a democratic classroom, in which teacher and student are engaged in co-operative learning and shared decision-making.

Again research indicates that teachers, particularly in the context of societies in transition with very limited resources, are much more likely to favour a teacher-centred approach to teaching and learning. And who can blame them? It is indeed a courageous teacher who attempts democratic strategies in classes of 40+ students. (Some caution is needed in utilising teacher/student ratios collected from observations from a small range of schools in both of the two case study countries, as the ratio varies considerably across provinces and the centralised statistical data may be unreliable or even non-existent). Education bureaucracies too, in societies in transition, are much more likely to support centralised control of the curriculum and its delivery in order to achieve what is seen as economic efficiencies. In an environment which is socially fragile, the acceptance of democratic processes is unlikely to occur.

In summary, the Terms of Reference for this project were very helpful in raising a number of central issues about the role education might play in enhancing social harmony. It became clear very early in the project that the focus of the study was broad ranging in that any examination of the role of education in a community inevitably raised issues about the aspirations and goals of the community.

Concepts and Dimensions of Citizenship

The broad approach taken by the research team is framed by the notion of the potential role schools can play in developing the 'good citizen'. It is argued that the concentration on only one attribute of citizenship, for example, the acquisition of civic knowledge or a disposition towards social tolerance, is only one component of a good citizen. Research data (Turney-Porta, 1997) clearly indicates that a curriculum approach which emphasises the learning of civic knowledge only, has minimal impact on young peoples' sense of efficacy and interest in community affairs. Likewise an attitude of social tolerance cannot be taught or learned in isolation. We argue that there are numerous attributes that together might constitute the good citizen and that put together all of these attributes constitute the major goal for education.

The focus of this project therefore is not just about ' social tolerance' and ' cohesion', for these alone are but a small dimension of what it means to be a 'good' citizen. Being tolerant per se, does not equate with being a good citizen. One approach to tolerance might imply intention, another might mean active participation in community affairs. It is not the focus of this project to analyse a total range of models about civics and citizenship. However it is important for the research team to declare their hand in these definitions.

There has been a massive worldwide renewal of interest in citizenship since the early 1990s, sparked by a number of political events and trends throughout the world – perceptions of increasing voter apathy, the resurgence of nationalist movements, the impact of global forces on local social mores, the stresses created by increasingly multicultural societies and the decline of volunteerism in community activities. These events have made it clear that the well-being and stability of a modern democracy depends not only on the justice of its basic structure but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens (IEA Civics Study, 2000). But what do we mean by a 'good' citizen? One outcome of the attempts to answer this question has been to articulate notions of citizenship as both problematic and contestable. For example, Cogger (Cogger, 2000) has identified the following attributes of a 'good' citizen:

- a sense of identity
- the enjoyment of certain rights
- the fulfilment of corresponding obligations
- a degree of interest and involvement in public affairs
- an acceptance of basic societal values.

Ichilov (1990) has developed a 10 dimensional model of the characteristics of citizenship. The model places dimensions of citizenship along a spectrum with theory at one end and active engagement at the other. A disposition towards social tolerance, for example, is by itself, only one part, perhaps theoretical, of one dimension. Other dimensions include civic knowledge, and again Ichilov draws the distinction between a person who has civic knowledge and a person who has a critical and reflective understanding of civic processes.

Gilbert (1996) has developed a typology for evaluating education programs which deal with citizenship education, suggesting:

- citizenship as legal status,
- citizenship as democratic identity,
- citizenship as public practice,
- citizenship as democratic participation.

Hannam (1999) in reviewing the data from education studies with a focus on the future of democracy included a list of eight characteristics crucial to the thinking about the good citizen. These are a kind of a set of dispositions and include:

- attitudes towards a democratic society
- human rights
- legal education
- environmental education
- economic education
- moral education
- development education
- problem solving, thinking and communication skills.

Prior's Dimensions of Citizenship

In this Project we have found Prior's (1999) model of citizenship in the context of a democratic society as the most useful framework for both coding the views of stakeholders about the role of schools in promoting social tolerance, and in deconstructing the discourse in curriculum documents. This model is also useful in that it encompasses and coheres the various characteristics of a 'good citizen' as outlined in the Terms of Reference for this project. For example, promoting respect and dialogue between cultures, strengthening democratic processes, promoting social tolerance and supporting community participation.

Prior has identified six dimensions of citizenship -

Dimension 1: Civic knowledge – for example, understandings about political organizations, decision making processes, institutions, legal requirements.

Dimension 2: A sense of personal identity - for example, a feeling of self-worth, belonging efficacy, resilience.

Dimension 3: A sense of community – for example, locating oneself within a community(s), some perhaps imagined communities.

Dimension 4: Adoption of a code of civil behaviours – for example, civil and ethical behaviour, concern for the welfare of others.

Dimension 5: An informed and empathetic response to social issues – for example, environmental issues, social justice, equality and equity.

Dimension 6: A skilled disposition to take social action – for example, community service, active participation in community affairs.

The strategy adopted by the research team was to utilize the methodology outlined in the Terms of Reference and to overlay the six dimensions of citizenship as a framework for coding the collected data. The research team was of the view that the focus of the project was the extent of synergy in the goals of schooling in achieving social harmony and citizenship

between the Ministries of Education (policy makers), the implementers (teachers), the receivers (students) and community (parents and other interested stakeholders).

Locating the Project in the Pacific Region

It soon became evident that the Terms of Reference of this project encompassed much broader issues than those specified within the original documents. Issues such as the nature of the visions and aspirations which people hold for themselves as individuals and also for their communities/nations are bound up with ideas and values underpinning the role of schools in supporting harmonious communities.

Some big questions that immediately faced the research team therefore included –

- What is a 'good citizen' in this region?
- Where do people 'locate' themselves – in families, villages, towns, islands, nations?
- What do people think about social harmony, cultural tolerance and democracy as components of the 'good citizen'?
- What, if anything, can schools do to bring about a 'better world'?
- What are the characteristics of the 'better world'?
- Do people believe that they can 'make a difference' to the betterment of their community?
- What roles do governments have in promoting social harmony?
- What levels of agreement are there on what constitute the 'right' answers to these questions?

These are questions that are not just affecting the daily lives of people in the Pacific region. Nor are they rhetorical questions. There is a sense of a worldwide urgency to seeking the 'answers' to these questions. Driving the asking of these questions are a series of what might be called 'mega-trends' in which powerful global forces appear to be taking the daily actions and beliefs away from traditional practices of common people and placing them in the hands of distant economic conglomerates. These mega trends will be discussed later in this report in the context of meanings of citizenship and the impact of globalisation.

The decision to locate this study in the Pacific Islands region and in particular in the two countries of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu was made by the World Bank. While the two countries have a number of things in common, an independent case study approach was taken. This approach allowed for the commonalities to be drawn and the individualities of the two countries to be preserved. Stakeholders appreciated this duality. A comparative approach was not supported by most of the stakeholders in both countries as it was deemed to be one which could lead to simplistic and non-productive comparisons with the identity of each country being lost in the quest for comparative data.

However the commonalities are many and they have all been explored in this study. This report demonstrates the duality of the approach adopted. There is a theoretical and methodological commonality, but separate case study data, separately reported. The conclusions discussed in Report 3 will draw on both the commonalities and significant differences between the two locations. A major outcome is the development of a framework/models which might be worthy of consideration by both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and other countries in the region, in Report 3.

A consideration of the history of the case study countries is important in illustrating the many variables which continue to impact on present day thinking and practices and sets a contextual framework in this instance for examining the role schools can play in promoting social cohesion and harmony in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

SECTION 2: CASE STUDY COUNTRY CONTEXT

Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands comprises nearly 1000 islands, about one-third of which are inhabited by a total population of about 400,000 who speak about 90 indigenous languages, plus Pijin. In such a place issues of identity and location and what it means to be a citizen are bound to be complex. As the recent Australian Council for Overseas Aid Report (2000), *Manmade Disaster in the Solomons,* noted:

> *Solomon Islands is a nation of villages, islands and cultural identities based on language and kinship. National identity is a recent phenomenon created by colonialisation and maintained through post-independence institutions.*

In pre-European times most people lived in small villages on tribal lands. In a subsistence economy, they practiced shifting garden cultivation, fishing, hunting, carving, weaving and canoe building. Rule was by kastom, as recalled by clan elders.

The arrival of Europeans in the sixteenth century saw the beginnings of the exploitation of local resources. From this time the process of colonialisation in the Solomon Islands took on the common features of other colonised countries, including attempts to eradicate local culture, the introduction of fatal European diseases, the establishment of British codes of law and the exploitation of local resources. As in Vanuatu, in the Solomons colonial exploitation culminated in the slave trade in the late nineteenth century where over 30,000 Solomon Islanders were kidnapped to work on the sugar cane fields in Australia and Fiji.

In the 1890s, Britain laid claim to most of what is now the Solomon Islands. Opposition simmered. The Kwaio Rebellion on Malaita in 1927 marked both the rejection of European values and the rise of ill-feelings towards governments in general. The invasion by Japan in World War 2 further dislocated traditional village life by ruining local economies. Massive battles during the war, fought primarily between troops from USA and Japan, caused significant loss of life and encouraged the relocation of many islanders seeking work at the US base on Guadalcanal.

Nationalist movements sprang up after the war, particularly in Malaita, but it was not until the late 1950s that Britain began to concede the need for some form of local autonomy. Regional assemblies were introduced and in 1970, an elected governing council was allowed. Independence from Britain was finally granted on 7 July 1978, with the capital city located in Honiara.

The change in status to an independent nation highlighted issues associated with the meaning of nationhood. Local island demands soon after independence gave rise to the creation of new provinces, from the previous four to nine provinces. Throughout the 1980s there emerged a growing number of grassroots movements expressing discontent with what they saw as the ever-increasing centralization of government services and structures in Honiara. Since independence the tension for all national governments has been the extent to which they could give in to local demands for autonomy, (which include demands for the granting of statehood) while at the same time building a national sentiment and identity. The most common explanation for recent events, regularly given by people on the streets, refers to the perceived neglect of the provinces (except Guadalcanal) by the central government, based in Honiara, on Guadalcanal.

In late 1998-99 armed conflict and civil war erupted between Malaitan and Guadalcanal people. The origins of the conflict are many, long standing and complex but land and land ownership were the fundamental issues. Significantly, the issues were expressed as issues of ethnic identity. A summary here cannot do justice to this tragic situation, but the many outcomes of the conflict have serious implications for the goals of this project. While there was little evidence now of the large-scale displacements of people, looting and a gun culture so often depicted during the height of the tensions, the longer term effects are now being felt.

The effects which fall within the scope of this project take the form of large numbers of displaced youth, collective demoralisation, a dramatic increase in the shortage of resources

available for education and an increased stridency associated with demands for the decentralisation of public services. Without the support of donor countries, the economy of the Solomons Islands would collapse. It is not surprising therefore that internal tensions continue to surface within the current government.

Here is a society in danger of collapsing under pressures associated with transition. It is far from destroyed, but its fragility is palpable. There is a great need to resolve long standing and still-simmering tensions, to recover from the most recent outbreaks of civil war and to actualise its potential to 'get it right' for the future. Whilst the outside world is prepared to assist, some of the global pressures are ones the Solomon Islands finds hard to reject. This is the push and pull effect of globalisation. Only the Solomon Islanders can decide how they can achieve APPROPRIATE national goals.

Vanuatu

With a population of approximately 180.000, living on over 80 islands, and with 113 distinct languages as well as many more additional dialects, the claim that Vanuatu is the most culturally diverse country in the world is well supported. The diversity of Vanuatu's cultures stems in part from the geographical fragmentation of the Y-shaped island group and in part from the long history of settlement, resettlement, conflict and exchange which began with the first colonisation of the islands which began about 3,000 years ago. Linguistic and archaeological evidence indicates that the first settlers were migrants from south-east Asia and Papua New Guinea.

The many flows of settlers led to the development of a number of complex and sophisticated societies, each with their own distinct political and social systems, but each linked to the surrounding cultural areas in what has been described as a chain-like formation. While throughout the country various systems exist for organising family and kinship relations and for the allocation of land, within all of Vanuatu's cultures there exist certain realms of life that are restricted to either men or women.

All traditional societies in Vanuatu have economies based on agriculture and life revolves around gardening and the use and importance of the land. Today most land remains under traditional land ownership systems. Only in the larger towns does title to some land rest with municipal authorities.

All of Vanuatu's history and lore is transmitted verbally, and in this context, sites in the landscape become important as the markers that index these stories, legends and histories that make up a group's identity. A particular cultural group is primarily defined by its kin ties, but can also be defined by its ancestral history. While language still remains a primary marker of membership of a particular group, a long history of interaction between groups within Vanuatu and between neighbouring countries has meant that it is normal for ni-Vanuatu to be multi-lingual.

The concepts of identity and location and what it means to be a citizen in Vanuatu are bound to be complex. The conditions of traditional settlement and 'kastom' indicate both push and pull forces in balancing an acceptance of diversity with a desire for national identity.

The first European to discover these islands was the Spanish explorer, Captain Pedro Ferdinand De Quiros, in 1605. He named them "Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo", believing he had discovered the great southern continent. The island he landed on still bears the name Espiritu Santo. The contacts with Europeans took many forms after the first recorded contact by de Quiros.

The process of colonialisation in Vanuatu took on the common features of other colonised countries. These features included the introduction of missionaries, attempts to eradicate local culture, the introduction of fatal European diseases, the establishment of European codes of law and the exploitation of local resources, and culminated in the slave trade in the late nineteenth century where Vanuatu workers were kidnapped to work on the sugar cane fields in Australia and Fiji. The rivalry between the French and English over the exploitation of local resources, resulted in the establishment of the Anglo-French Condominium of the New Hebrides in 1906 and its continuance until independence was achieved in 1980.

During the first decades of the Condominium, the joint administration of English and French colonial rule, neither country showed much interest in education. During the 1940s the French assisted the Catholic Church to establish French-medium of instruction schools with in urban centres. and in the 1960s the British assisted Protestant Churches to establish many English-medium schools, mainly in rural areas. In response more French-medium schools were established in rural areas.

Vernacular language instruction which had continued in some of the first mission schools gradually disappeared as the two European powers in the Condominium became the major providers, mostly through the agency of churches of separate, competing and duplicating education systems. Introduced European languages challenged traditional languages by becoming the only languages of instruction in schools. Introduced Christian beliefs challenged traditional bases of beliefs and customs.

The continuation of church supported schools in Vanuatu today is reflected in the continuation of the dual system of language of instruction and in the policy of government schools and government-assisted schools. For the focus of this project, the extent to which the issues created by the continuing links between churches and state and the continuation of an education system with two foreign languages of instruction are significant in the creation of social harmony in Vanuatu.

The early colonial period and the later Condominium decades in the twentieth century added levels of complexity to identity and citizenship in Vanuatu. The trend towards urbanisation increased dramatically during the later years of the Condominium and Vila, in particular, became the focus for people hoping to find work. It was in Vila and to a lesser extent in Luganville, the only other large town in Vanuatu, that the traditions of village kinship were challenged as people from all islands settled in these two towns. The situation at the beginning of the twenty first century is that many of these young town dwellers are the products of several generations of town dwellers, and Vila is their 'village'. Some of these town dwellers will never return to their home island.

The development of the economy based on foreign-owned companies in fishing, agriculture, mining and tourism continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century. It was the beginning of an economic boom in the 1960s which led to an emerging demand by ni-Vanuatu for the reclaiming of traditional lands back from foreign ownership. Several movements, based on demands for the return of traditional lands, emerged, including what became the first political party, the Nagriamel movement, in Espiritu Santo.

After years of opposing a power-sharing arrangement with in-Vanuatu, the Condominium authorities finally agreed to the holding of a set of general elections in 1975, when the first Representative Assembly was elected. After the election of the third assembly in 1979,Walter Lini became the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Vanuatu and in 1980 Georges Sokomanu was elected as the first President.

At Independence in 1980, the new government inherited two systems of education. The change in status to that of an independent nation highlighted the issue of the meaning of nationhood. One of the immediate challenges was the need to address the political structure of the new nation and the distribution of powers. Vanuatu was a created nation of mostly rural villages with a long tradition of a village chief system. The welfare and well-being of village communities rested with the community. This tradition was based on respect of the keepers of wisdom, the village chief.

The adoption of a national framework for education by the national government, rather than province or island-based, has resulted in schooling becoming one, if not the only one, common experience for most ni-Vanuatu. The question then arises as to the ability of 'one' system (acknowledging the subsets of Anglo and Francophone schools) to effectively and sensitively cater for the diversity of cultures in Vanuatu.

The Vanuatu Constitution states that:

The national language of the Republic is Bislama. The official languages are Bislama, English, and French. The principal languages of education are English and French.

In many ways this section of the Constitution and the mixed messages it gives about language as one of the most important symbols of identity and social cohesion, reflects the difficulties of a new nation engaged in establishing a national identity.

Here is a society that has been named as being in 'transition' with new 'traditions' being established in the post colonial period of only twenty years. It is our view that Vanuatu could more accurately be described as being engaged in a period of accommodation or adjustment. Transition suggests to us that the direction is towards the new, whereas our observation is that Vanuatu is determined to find a balance of 'old' and 'new'. Like the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu cannot escape the impact of globalisation on its economy. In both countries, key stakeholders interviewed by the research team acknowledged the pressures of balancing economies in transition with accommodations only to traditional customs.

What is the role of schools in this context?

SECTION 3: MEANINGS OF CITIZENSHIP:

Implications for the Solomon Islands & Vanuatu in the Twenty-first Century

One of the most significant contributions of the recently published report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century – *Education: The Treasure Within,* (Tedesco, 1997) was in identifying:

> *The ability to live together as one of the fundamental objectives of education in the future...The capacity to live together means respect for diversity and the search for resolving social conflict through negotiation... Living together is a key element in the building of democracy ...*

In addressing the issues of living together in social harmony, transitional societies such as the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu face two contradictory principles. On the one hand they are organised around issues of individual and collective subsistence, scarcity, and some desire to participate and share in some of the products of the global economy. The extent to which the balance can be achieved can result in exclusionary practices such as those with work and those without work, children who can stay on at schools and those who can't, and the disproportionate amount of money distributed to the area where the capital city is located, compared to the outer provinces. On the other hand, the desired balance of societies in transitional adjustment also involves a desire for secure and collective social solidarity and cohesiveness. The implications of this tension are born out, in the formal sense, in the nature of the constitutions of the countries. In terms of this project, the tension is played out in conceptualising the role of education can play in fostering the type of young citizen desired by the countries.

Within a sociological approach to citizenship the first thing emphasised about citizenship is that it controls access to the scarce resources of society and hence this allocative function can be a source of a profound conflict in societies over citizenship membership criteria. Any benchmark of citizenship would therefore have to include some notion of egalitarian openness to difference and otherness, of social harmony and tolerance, as essential ingredients of a democratic system. Who gets citizenship clearly indicates the prevailing formal criteria of inclusion/exclusion within a community and how these resources, following citizenship membership, are allocated and administered largely determines the economic and social fate of individuals and families. (Turner, 1997)

Another aspect of citizenship is that it confers, in addition to a legal status, a particular cultural identity on individuals and groups. Citizenship struggles in the late twentieth century have often been about claims to cultural identity and cultural history and racial equality. Citizenship and clear notions of civic virtues are seen as essential ingredients of a civilised and pluralist democracy.

The final component of this sociological model of citizenship is the idea of a political community as the basis of citizenship. This political community is typically the nation-state. When individuals become citizens they not only enter into a set of institutions that confers upon them rights and obligations, they not only acquire an identity, they are not only socialised into civic virtues, but they also become members of a political community with a particular territory and history. Since nations are imaginary communities and since nations are created, sometimes by outsiders, as was the case of both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the communal basis of citizenship has to be constantly renewed within the collective memory by such events as festivals and public ceremonies.

A series of public meetings with a title of 'A Civil Society' was recently held (May 2001) in Honiara to discuss these very issues of nationhood, community and identity. The research team attended these meetings and came away from the discussions with a sense of a nation trying to define itself. The arguments commonly raised during the meetings as to why any country needs to define itself included:

- The reduction in government overheads
- The existence of an inherited set of commonalities, even despite diversities
- The widespread existence of institutions, for example, the church, the Chief system
- A belief in biological commonalities, for example, Melanesian

- The importance of being on the world stage, for example, trading in the global economy.

In Vanuatu, the research team attended a number of public meetings in June 2001 with a title, 'The Comprehensive Reform Program' (CRP). This national government initiative is an attempt to revitalise and give direction to the goals and aspirations of ni-Vanuatu. Speakers from a wide range of experiences including government ministers, principals of schools, community leaders, teachers and students drew upon the theme of one nation, one people, one goal. A critical element in these discussions was the need for effective and efficient government. Directly related to the focus of this study were the following suggestions made by speakers:

- The need to discuss government and parliament in schools
- The need for effective and transparent government
- The need for national stability and social cohesion
- The need to defend freedoms and human rights
- The central role of respect in relationships and communications of all sorts.

The argument will be made throughout this report that until a nation defines itself and has a coherent and agreed vision(s) of its past and of its future, its education system will reflect this waywardness and lack of direction.

In some senses the context of the Pacific island region is immaterial in a globalised view of the world. The emergence of the so-called global mega-trends (Kennedy 1998) of the twenty-first century – the recognition of cultural and ethnic diversity, the globalisation of economies, the impact of communications technologies, the changing role of world bodies like the United Nations and redefinitions of decision making processes - have the potential to shape the identity of nations both now and in the future.

The challenge facing all nations, but in particular those nations in transition and facing severe adjustments, is squarely confronting a number of options. These options include embracing the mostly outcomes based educational reform models, or ignoring the global pressure as being irrelevant to their educational needs, or adopting some form of mid-way position of taking on the most appropriate external elements while at the same time maintaining and defending indigenous values.

The stepped up global pressure for educational transformation and change are particularly noticeable in emerging democracies or societies in transition where a worsening set of contextual realities face schools and ministries of education. These pressures in these post-colonial societies can be illustrated by –

- Low levels of belief in community mobilisation and consequently top-down, technocratically led educators, for parents are too busy now trying to make ends meet.
- Lowering levels of public confidence in schooling.
- Higher levels of violent crime.
- Lower levels of public efficacy and confidence in the value or ability of individuals to take action to change the social conditions of existence.
- Lower confidence and expectations in the public sector to deliver and administer an efficient social program.
- High levels of unemployment
- Increasing levels of xenophobia
- Narrow party politics played out publically and in secret that further weakens solidarity and a sense of community efficacy.

Countries like the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, as most other countries in the world, have begun to engage in the balancing act of trying to work out if/how to confront these megatrends, while at the same time maintaining a strong sense of community. Signs and symptoms of attempts at balancing the pressures of transition and adjustment are not difficult to observe. In the Solomon Islands a deficit in well-being, in particular, is not hard to find. For example, stakeholders in remote locations frequently commented on the lack of social services now almost expected as being universally available, the non-recognition of the role of villages chiefs by young people and the remoteness of secondary schools from their village.

Vanuatu on the other hand has a much more developed economic infrastructure, a greater abundance of natural resources, more sources of access to foreign influences and communities appear to have a clearer sense of the extent of adjustment they are prepared to make. It is our impression gained from interactions and interviews with stakeholders that this is a major difference in attitude between Ni-Vanuatu and Solomon Islanders. The reasons for this sense of adjustment in Vanuatu are not clear, but it is our impression that there is a greater sense of personal and collective ease with cultural difference (local and foreign) in Vanuatu. In the Solomon Islands, at the time of this project, the level of suspicion and mistrust for both internal cultural differences (as seen by he racial tensions) and external cultural differences (as seen by the sudden closure of the major fishing company by its foreign owners) is in marked contrast to the situation in Vanuatu.

Schools and Citizenship

Schools are often at the centre of a community and ministries of education need to be cognisant of debates about what the community expects of its schools. If there is debate, it should contribute to the sort of society individuals want to live in. The schools' role is to develop a curriculum which directly and obviously contributes to the sort of society we want to live in. However when there is a rapid rate of social, economic and technological change and a lack of inspirational leadership to help people to deal with it, there appears a shift in the focus of peoples' attention from the macro (for example, the big mega-trends) to the micro (the things that ordinary individuals feel they can control). In the Solomon Islands, for example, the multiple factors impacting on the daily lives of people, for example, unemployment, local racial tensions and the paying of school fees, loom large in peoples' minds and often result in a climate of mistrust, fear and a lack of a sense of efficacy.

This report is not the place to engage in a detailed analysis of the recent ethnisc tensions. However, recent tensions and the transition to the current political regime was made possible by the active mobilisation of at least some of the citizenry. One year later, this society in transition was burdened by an inactive citizenry with low levels of mobilisation and with no confidence in the public service, including the education sector, and in the delivery of services. Yet despite the continuation of isolated incidents of violence there is growing evidence that social harmony is a national goal. There is, however, little evidence of national, co-ordinated, or a grassroots response to what contribution education might play in the alleviation of social intolerance.

There is a huge irony in all of this. It is not simply a matter of trying to work out what kind of knowledge, skills and values are needed if communities and societies are to understand and actively contribute to shaping their own futures. There are also what might be called civic realities of everyday life – drug taking, youth suicide, homelessness, youth unemployment and gambling. Youth culture across the world has nurtured not only shared consumer tastes but widespread aspiration for freedom, while enhanced emphasis on individual choice has challenged long-standing notions of youth as passive recipients of lessons from their elders. (IEA Executive Summary). In the process of societies turning away from the global megatrends and to the community, both the global megatrends and the local civic realities have been ignored. The attempt to recreate or return to traditional small communities, while insulating temporarily against the less appealing aspects of the bigger picture, sooner or later results in divisions between the haves and the have-nots. Fostering a personal sense of belonging to a local community is praise- worthy and therapeutic. However unless attention is also paid to the health of other communities, and to the larger context in which they all exist, the fragmentation of society will continue at a rapid rate.

In a society in transition/adjustment, the perception that justice, honesty and fairness is/can prevail is critical for supporting and sustaining an education system which includes citizenship education programs. Any curriculum renewal in this transient context will need to include a broad vision of the 'better future world' with values and assumptions clearly articulated. The challenge, for policy makers in the context of a society in transition, is how to actively engage communities in framing policy, given popular passivity and low social participation. Centralised bureaucratic systems do not lend themselves easily to real consultation. The real test of a 'truly civilised society' lies in our willingness to engage with those who are quite unlike us, who may appear to be in a mess and seem like strangers, and yet are part of us. Participation in all of society's processes will be central for future citizens, otherwise they run the risk of being marginalized. The cost of ignorance, indifference, apathy

and antipathy to participating in the processes of enhancing the well-being of all members of the communities manifests itself not only in social terms but also in financial terms when the infrastructure (again both socially and financially) of the community breaks down. The Pacific region has seen several recent examples of this. This breakdown invariably leads to a feeling of mistrust and manifests itself in the rapid decline of social cohesion. The challenge for societies is to reach agreement on what it is that enables people to work and live side by side for the common good while celebrating each others' differences. The challenge for schools is to prepare young people who cannot only survive in a mega-trend world, but who can constantly transform it so that it is locally viable, personally meaningful and socially beneficial.

Effective democracy comes about as a result of a balance being maintained between the views of majorities and minorities. Since all these, often diverging, views cannot, at one time, be incorporated in policy or government programs, tolerance of this divergence of opinion must be practised. Tolerance is thus important to the maintenance of a relatively calm, productive democratic society. Citizenship education's role in a democratic society is more than that of contributing to social harmony and cohesion. It is one of reconciliation. An education system that sees its goal as assisting young people to grow into competent, democratic citizens understands the complexities and problematics of the process and understands the need for reconciling the views of all stakeholders.

Project Description

The primary aim of this project, as cited in the Terms of Reference, was to develop a general operational framework for the design of a school-based citizenship education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific island nations. In particular, this project addressed how educational systems in these multicultural societies can forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were proposed by the World Bank as country case studies. The research methodology and in particular the educational framework to be developed for enhancing social tolerance and citizenship was to be one which could be used and replicated in other country settings. Moreover, the findings and policy recommendations of these case studies were to serve as a basis to orient potential policy options for other island nations in the region.

(a) Stakeholder assessment: The research team was responsible for collecting data from three different locations in Vanuatu and in the Solomon Islands. The first data included a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes. The school sample was drawn to reflect maximum diversity in terms of ethnic, language, religious and regional backgrounds as well as including socio-economic and rural/urban diversity. The information which was collected served as a basis to understanding prevalent attitudes towards multiculturalism and pluralism. This data is the focus of Report 1.

(b) Operational assessment: Concurrently with the stakeholder assessment, the research team performed a review of present school-based practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion. The activities in this sub-component of the project included an analysis of civic/multicultural values in the prescribed curriculum and textbooks, as well as observable related school activities, classroom behaviour and management practices. This data is the focus of Report 2.

Overall, this activity of stakeholder assessment and operational assessment allowed for the identification of possible vectors of intervention to promote social understanding and civic participation.

These two reports have as a target audience local policymakers and educators. The findings and recommendations from the reports served as a basis for the reflection workshop discussions.

(c) Reflective workshop: The consultant team was responsible for organizing a national reflective workshop in both countries with a view to sharing some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop aimed to promote discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program. The workshop enabled the research team to discuss the data already collected and to give participants another opportunity to reflect on current policies and practices and contribute their views about future directions. These workshops were conducted in Honiara on 25 May, 2001 and in Port Vila on 22 June 2001.

(d) Policy Framework: Building on the findings of Reports 1 and 2 and the feedback from the reflective workshops, the research team developed a framework for the development of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" agenda. This framework was specifically tailored to Pacific island conditions, promoting national cohesion and democratic participation, while respecting cultural diversity and social tolerance. This framework aims to provide a foundation for policymakers to review and address the role of schooling in promoting social cohesion, as well as some basic instruments for teachers to include citizenship education in their daily practices. This framework is the focus of Report 3.

(e) Reporting meeting: The research team organised a meeting with key Ministry of Education policy makers in each country on completion of the reports. This meeting aimed to highlight the most significant aspects of the reports for each country and to discuss the way forward. These meetings are to be conducted in Honiara and Port Vila, in August 2001, after the three Reports have been submitted by the research team and have been discussed with the World Bank.

Research Team

Warren Prior: (Project Manager) Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – warrenp@deakin.edu.au

Suzanne Mellor: Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – mellor@acer.edu.au

Graeme Withers: Senior Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email - **withers@acer.edu.au**

In this case study research, data was gathered from four types of sources:

1. Interviews of various people or participants who are involved in the phenomena of the study.
2. Documents such as curriculum outlines, syllabuses, teaching materials, policy documents, examples of student work.
3. Direct observation of the phenomena in action.
4. A reflective workshop.

In case study research the methodology of gathering data has the potential to be value-laden. The researchers were very conscious of the cultural context in which they were working and the cultural baggage they carried with them. It is part of the researchers' task to be alert to the participants' agendas and baggage. The interviewees in this study, were sometimes acting as representatives of various organizations and at other times were giving their own personal perceptions.

Selecting Stakeholders

The research team has been very fortunate in having access to a wide range of stakeholders with interests in schooling in both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The definition of a 'stakeholder' was taken very broadly. The researchers approached both countries with a list of potential stakeholders, developed from research conducted before arrival. Before leaving Australia on fieldwork, individuals and representatives of organizations were also interviewed. For example, several Australian teachers who had recently returned from a two year AVA posting to Vanuatu were interviewed.

In both countries Ministry officials were one group of stakeholders. They in turn recommended that researchers discuss the project with other individuals and/or people who represented particular groups or organizations. So the web grew as these people introduced us to yet more interested stakeholders.

The participants have been stakeholders both from within and outside of schools. The first fieldwork visits concentrated on non-school stakeholders. This had the advantage of allowing the research team to establish a broad-brush picture of the social/cultural context in the two countries. This approach also allowed for the initial establishment of networks of interested stakeholders in the wide community. During the second series of fieldwork visits the focus was on interviewing stakeholders within specific school communities, including teachers, students, parents and principals. The data from the school community group has been woven into the report of all stakeholders. A full list of stakeholders, by country, is attached to this report. (See Attachments 1a and 1b)

Classifying stakeholders is, of course, not as simple as this text implies. Some stakeholders came wearing several hats, including that of 'parent', a 'teacher' as well as perhaps a 'member of an organization'. In our attempt to analyse the participants' views about the role schools might play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship, some time in the interview was given to discussing the participants' frame of reference and/or the origins of their views. The selection of stakeholders in total was governed by a number of factors, including availability, and was restricted in both countries to school stakeholders from three locations (as outlined in the Terms of Reference)

Interview Schedules

To clarify the focus of the interviews and to ensure consistency of approach across the three interviewers in the project, the three members of the research team developed two common interview schedules used as frameworks for stakeholder interviews. The structure and content of these two schedules were robustly discussed by the members of the research team, and also with the project manager from the World Bank and members of the project advisory committee. One schedule was developed for use with non-school stakeholders, for example, Ministry of Education officials, the Council of Chiefs in Vanuatu and a representative of the

Peace Monitoring Council in the Solomon Islands. The other schedule was developed for use within school communities, for stakeholders including teachers, students and parents. The two interview schedules are appended to the relevant reports. (See Attachments 2a and 2b)

By their very nature, case-study interview schedules are only beginnings. The unique response and view of the interviewee are what are being sought, so no generic schedule will ever suffice. Thus the interview schedules were not followed slavishly and were often modified to suit the context of the fieldwork. They should be taken to demonstrate the issues addressed and the common core data sought by the researchers

Interviews

In practice the interview generally took one of four directions:

1. An informal interview in which questions emerged from the immediate context.
2. An interview guide approach in which issues were specified in advance and the researcher decided the sequence in the course of the interview.
3. A standardized open-ended interview in which the exact sequence of questions was determined in advance and participants were asked the same questions in the same order.
4. A closed, fixed response interview in which questions and response categories were determined in advance.

All four strategies were used over the time given for interviews. The selection of which strategy to use was often determined on the spot in the context of the factors like the time available for the interview and the relevance of the information being offered by the interviewee. Experience in case-study research is a major asset in such work.

As a generalisation, the framing of questions was carefully considered to suit the participants and the discussions were deliberately informal, with the participant sometimes having the running of the direction of ideas. The focus of the discussions was determined by the participant's perceptions and experiences of issues of social tolerance, in general and then in particular, and on the role schools did or might play in creating a better society. All interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participant, and anonymity was offered. The time given to the interviews varied but on average the typical discussion lasted for about one hour.

When reviewing the tape recordings, the research team coded the responses according to Prior's six dimensions of citizenship model. Particular attention was given to aspects like social tolerance, but in general participants moved between most of the dimensions. This was to be expected. The presentation of the findings from the data collection, in Sections 4 and 5 of this report, and in Report 2, has been structured around the six dimensions. Where possible, the words of the participants have been used to illustrate key issues.

Analysis of documents

During the fieldwork to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, numerous documents were collected. These took many forms:

- Ministry of Education curriculum documents
- Ministry of Education policy documents
- Teacher training materials
- Teacher-adapted curriculum materials
- Non-school materials
- Student writings (Solomon Islands only)

The curriculum documents collected by the research team included course outlines, teachers' handbooks and course specific students' resources. A full set of curriculum/syllabus documents was not available in either country, due to a number of reasons. In the Solomon Islands, for example, no one, including the Curriculum Development Centre, was able to provide a copy of the Form 1-3 Social Studies syllabus, until one was finally discovered in a rural school. The focus of the analysis of these curriculum documents was to assess the extent to which, on paper at least, they promoted positive social development for young people.

In the second category, the research team was unable to collect many policy documents as both countries are currently engaged in developing strategic education plans. Mostly these were not as yet complete and while we were able to discuss the plans with key Ministry of Education officials, we are unable to offer many insights into the policies. The timing of this study was apt for education policy-makers in the two countries, as it came at the very time both administrations were considering future policy directions. We would like to think that the outcomes of this study will inform policy makers. We have some confidence in this thinking following the very successful reflective workshops organised by the research team for key education stakeholders at the completion of the fieldwork in each country. (See subsequent comments)

In relation to the third data collection source, it was very fortuitous that the timing of this study in the Solomon Islands occurred when the Honiara newspaper, the *Solomon Star,* initiated a secondary student writing competition. The topic was: *To bring peace and harmony back to our happy isles.* The research team considered this key stakeholder data to be of enormous value. Approximately 500 essays were received from all provinces in the Solomon Islands and the research team analysed 100 of these essays for evidence of young peoples' views about promoting social tolerance and cohesion. Their views about social cohesion are included in the first report of Solomon Islander stakeholders' views on citizenship. In including excerpts from the writings of the students, their writing style and syntactic idiosyncrasies have been retained in their original form.

Observations of school-based practices

In this study observations were limited to three locations in each of the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu. In both case study countries, Ministry of Education officials generously gave their time to organise a series of visits to a range of schools in the three different locations. The locations were chosen to ... *maximize diversity in terms of ethnic, language and religious backgrounds as well as include socio-economic and rural/urban diversity.* (Terms of Reference) In some cases this involved travelling long distances over near impassable roads and in other cases hiring of canoes to visit a school on an outer island. However on many occasions, and for a number of reasons, the Ministry letter of support for the project, and the summary of the project goals, prepared by the research team, (see attachment 3) had not reached the school before the researchers arrived. As can be expected in such a situation there was often some confusion and the need for extended negotiations in order for a possible visit to a local school to proceed. This was time consuming for the research team, although in all cases, the local authorities enthusiastically supported the focus of the study and generously gave their time to arrange visits to schools. It is important to note again how on every occasion the issues embedded in the role schools might play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship was considered to be of critical importance by members of school communities. A total of 30 schools was visited in the project; 14 in the Solomon Islands and 16 in Vanuatu. They are listed in Report 2.

Generally in each school it was the Principal or teacher(s) who participated in the discussions. However on some occasions a member of the school's Board of Governors, parents and students were also interviewed. The visiting schedule developed by local authorities did not allow for extended visitations, but on average about three hours was spent in each school. The amount of data collected during each visit varied. On some occasions the researchers were invited to talk to all teachers in the school. On other occasions it was with selected teachers.

On other occasions the researchers had free rein of the school and could observe many classes in action and were invited to conduct impromptu lessons. In qualitative educational research the observation process often means sitting in classrooms in the most unobtrusive manner possible and watching teachers deliver instructional programs to students. The researchers were sometimes well aware that what they were observing represented – at least in part – a performance influenced by the teacher's perception of the focus of the study. Classroom activities were not tape-recorded.

Reflective Workshops: Purpose and Process

In the course of the stakeholder interviews and visits to schools, invitations were issued to all interviewees to attend a 'reflective workshop' toward the concluding phase of the project. Two workshops were held, one in Honiara and the other in Port Vila. Included in this report is a copy of the handout given to participants at the workshops, indicating the goals and structure of the day-long program. (See Attachment 4) In both case study countries, it was impossible to predetermine who the participants might be. Issues of attendance were affected by such factors as the timing of workshops on a working day, being given permission to attend and the costs associated with travelling to the capital city.

The program of the workshop followed a similar pattern in both locations. As the included handout indicates, the workshops had a number of goals:

- To create a reflective space outside of normal workplaces to encourage participants to reflect on beliefs, values and assumptions underlying current policies and practices.
- To create an environment and an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to meet and share their perspectives on the role education might play in promoting social tolerance.
- To inform participants of the progress of the project.
- To enable participants to verify/validate/affirm the researchers' work so far as presented.
- To enable participants to further contribute to the preliminary findings of the project.
- To share with participants and explore together how the focus of the project-the promotion of social tolerance-can be framed within notions of citizenship.
- To discuss what might be some potential strategies for further enhancing how schools might promote citizenship.

On a number of measurements of effectiveness, including the range of stakeholders who attended, the extent of audience participation and the comments from the evaluation document, the reflective workshop proved to be an important research strategy in this project. From the beginning of the first activity, a mind-mapping exercise, to the concluding activity, the establishment of national priorities for future action, the participants actively engaged in discussions of the complex conceptual issues of tolerance, democratic processes and citizenship. It was particularly pleasing to note how individuals listened and engaged with ideas coming from a range of different stakeholders, for example, classroom teachers and curriculum developers talking with senior Ministry of Education officials.

In terms of inputs to the project, the workshops confirmed, amended and enhanced the data collected to date. It also provided some additional insights and data. These will be the particular focus of the third project report.

Reflective Workshop: Solomon Islands

In Honiara, the workshop was attended by 18 participants. Stakeholder groups 'represented' by the participants included teachers, principals, teacher trainers, womens' groups, Ministry of Education, religious groups, non-government organizations and interested members of the community. (For a full listing see Attachment 5)

In the context of the difficulties associated with getting leave from schools to attend outside activities, it was very pleasing to note the attendance of 5 teachers at the reflective workshop. These teachers, all young and enthusiastic about the focus of the project, made a valuable contribution to the workshop discussions. They also added a sense of realism of classroom practices that officials from the Ministry of Education had to acknowledge. The contribution of the two representatives from the non-government vocational education sector also brought to the workshop a perspective of the employment needs of young people. The discussions were frank and open, and, at the conclusion of the workshop participants were robustly discussing the need for a national set of goals of education for the Solomon Islands.

Reflective Workshop: Vanuatu

In Port Vila, the workshop was attended by 24 participants. Stakeholder groups 'represented' by the participants included teachers, principals (from the three selected locations), teacher trainers, curriculum developers, key Ministry of Education officials, religious groups, non-government organizations and interested members of the community. (For a full listing see Attachment 5)

As the day developed, an appreciation of the need for the establishment of a national set of goals for education in Vanuatu was voiced by participants and was supported by the research team/workshop leaders. It was argued by participants that unless a national goals policy, developed with wide community consultation, was put in place, then individual schools would continue to be confused about their own school policy direction. Included in this report is a copy of the draft national goals of education developed by the three groups of a diverse range of stakeholders during the reflective workshop. These goals were collated and refined by the workshop leader, then referred, on request, to the Ministry of Education. (See Attachment 6) The two documents were the focus of discussion by Ministry officials in a senior planning committee. Feedback from this committee to the researchers was enthusiastic and thankful for the project's contribution to the policy process.

SECTION 5: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON THE ROLE SCHOOLS CAN PLAY IN NATION BUILDING IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

In accordance with the Terms of Reference of this study, the research team was

> *Responsible for collecting data from a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes.*

The data collected about Solomon Island stakeholders' views on the role schools can play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship has been categorised within Prior's six dimensions of citizenship as discussed above. This proved to be a useful coding framework for analysing the data. This process aids the qualitative nature of the study by allowing the voices of the stakeholders to be heard. No attempt has been made to quantify the data as the number of stakeholders was relatively small at approximately 100. This number does not include the 100 student essays, but it does include those occasions when the researchers spoke with whole school staffs.

The order in which the six dimensions of citizenship are listed is not meant to be of any significance. It will become clear that they overlap. Collectively they frame the notion of a 'good citizen'. Where the data relate to specific aspects of curriculum and school-based practices, some brief analysis of school-based stakeholder comment has been included in this report. However a more detailed analysis has been included in Report 2 which deals with the operational assessment of school-based practices.

No attempt has been made to identify individual stakeholders as the total of the collective data is of more significance to the outcomes of this study. However when a particularly apt or typical comment was made by a stakeholder this has been quoted to allow the voice of the participants to be heard.

Dimension 1: Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge refers to those understandings about the civic processes in any community. This is not to imply that these processes will take exactly the same form in every community. For young people to contribute to, and participate in, decision-making processes, they need a well-developed understanding of the institutions involved and the actual democratic processes of engagement as they relate to the institutions and in their society. Examples of civic knowledge include:

- Understandings about the decision-making processes in the community, for example, the role of village chiefs, pressure groups, elections and government
- Knowledge about civic institutions, for example, courts, parliament, schools, village chiefs
- Understandings about the legal requirements and obligations of citizenship, for example, becoming a legal citizen, paying taxes, voting at elections
- Understandings about the historical and cultural contexts in which a community exists, for example, knowledge about different island cultures, use of vernacular languages

Those stakeholders outside of the education sector frequently commented that young people in the Solomon Islands lacked civic knowledge and that schools did not give sufficient attention to the conservation of traditional cultural values and practices. They gave a number explanations for this lack of knowledge. They argued that in pre-European times, the processes of decision-making in village communities revolved around the micro unit of the family and the more macro unit of the village chief system. Present day pressures on villages, including migration away from traditional village and family life and the breakdown of the authority of the village chiefs by the introduction of both churches and formal provincial and national governments, had resulted, in these stakeholders' views, in complex and often entangled ambiguities in the area of decision-making processes in communities. One village chief-designate comments were typical of this group of stakeholders:

The Chief system is still operating, but under stress, by taking away powers to churches and provincial governments during colonial times and now to national governments and local members. All of these have usurped much of the traditional powers. Politicians do not consult, and there is no register of Chiefs, so governments cannot, or will not, use them for consultation... Is it any wonder young people are confused?
(Village chief-designate, Munda village, Western Province)

Young people, as stakeholders, often referred to 'the government' as the major decision maker, but closer inspection of these comments overwhelmingly revealed very little understanding of the division of powers and decision-making processes. Young people mostly didn't know the decision makers in the community. They did know that in schools – neither teachers nor the curriculum - offered them any assistance in enhancing their understandings about decision makers and decision making. For one student beginning secondary schooling, understandings about civic institutions were a total mystery:

My father sometimes talked about the chief in our village. But I never met him and don't know what he did. I don't know anything about the government in Honiara... No I don't know the name of the Prime Minister.
(Discussions with Year 7 students, at a remote boarding school, Western Province)

Some older students could see the complexities in the situation:

Leaders including our teachers, should be guided by our traditional experiences of 'community living' and 'collective wisdom'... The government must encourage people to participate effectively in this process of decision making.
(Form 5 Student writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)

Another senior student had a view of what civic knowledge was necessary and had a very well formed strategy to assist in recreating social harmony and cohesion in the Solomon Islands:

One of the ways of bringing back and maintaining peace and harmony is to make use of the socio-political structure of the village, by making use of the village chiefs who can arrange programmes for the community... programmes that will help the people about the importance of working together and building a better community.
(Form 5 Student writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)

Adult stakeholders charged schools with this civic knowledge responsibility. The Citizenship Commission, for example, argued that the current curriculum did not mention the concept of legal citizenship and that young people had no idea about what was required to become a citizen of the Solomon Islands.

There was widespread agreement among stakeholders in the community that Community Studies in the Primary School and Social Studies in the Secondary School were the logical areas of the curriculum to place this area of study. Those stakeholders in the education sector, with specific knowledge of the curriculum noted that the current syllabuses for Community Studies and Social Studies were written in the 1980s and that the documents no longer reflected the values and aspirations of the Solomon Islands in the twenty-first century. They argued that the current emphasis on the colonial period and other Euro-centred topics, for example, the 1960's Cuban Crisis, were inappropriate for young people in Solomon Islands today. Instead, stakeholders wanted more emphasis on current Solomon Island political processes and policies in the curriculum, in particular, in the Social Studies curriculum. These stakeholders believed that the inclusion of a more inclusive form of curriculum in schools would greatly assist the promotion of social harmony and cultural tolerance.

The most common and the most passionate comments by adult stakeholders about the lack of civic knowledge, involved the perception that young people today in the Solomon Islands do not know about and understand the pre-European cultural civic traditions. All civic traditions have historical antecedents grounded in cultural customs and it was here that these stakeholders believed most work needed to be done in schools. The following comments made by a parent, during one of the field work visits to a school in the outer provinces reflects this perception.

If we want our children to show tolerance and to live in peace with people from other areas... they must know something about both their own traditions and customs, and then, that of others.
(After school meeting with 15 parents, Western Province)

The views of stakeholders, both within the education sector and community representatives, usually focused on the perception that young people had a serious lack of civic knowledge. The lack of understanding and appreciation about traditional decision making processes was commonly cited. These stakeholders were aware that this situation was exacerbated by the current reality of an overwhelming majority of students leaving school at the end of primary school level.

Rarely however was the view expressed that these cultural understandings should be placed alongside understandings about present day political processes. This however, was the view of teachers of Social Studies stakeholders, particularly those teachers in secondary schools.

I want my students in Forms 4 and 5 to know about how our government works. A major role of the teacher of Social Studies is to give students access to this political knowledge... There is no place for this in the current Social Studies syllabus. I'm sure they don't do it anywhere else in the curriculum.
(Experienced teacher of Social Studies, Guadalcanal Province)

Finally, a sound understanding of civic knowledge, per se, may not be a positive force in enhancing social harmony. If these understandings are acquired uncritically, then the collective memories of a community may well be static and may contribute to the continuing dominance of conservative elites. In the worst-case scenario, the promotion of an uncritical approach to the acquisition of civic knowledge results in little more than propaganda. If a major goal of schooling in a democratic society is to develop young active and participating citizens, then the health of the community relies on coming generations to rejuvenate ideals through critical appraisal of past performance and the creation of new visions.

Dimension 2 : A Sense of Personal Identity

The psychological theories of the development of positive personal identity, or a feeling of self-worth, are well grounded in the belief that the level of an individual's self-esteem is critical to that person being able to, or wanting to, relate or bond with another person or group. A willingness to empathise with, and be tolerant of, other diverse cultural groups or individuals is predicated on a sense of self worth and personal well being. Examples of a positive sense of personal identity include :

- A feeling of personal security and belonging
- A willingness to trust other people
- A sense of efficacy
- A capacity for resilience
- A recognition of the origins of one's values and beliefs.

Many adult stakeholders, but particularly those in Guadalcanal, commented on what to them was a collective loss of self-esteem by young people living in and near Honiara. It is in the urban area of Honiara where the larger numbers of young people are more obvious. The dislocation of families resulting from the recent tensions has created a number of demographic trends. Families moving to and from Honiara have disrupted the continuation of schooling for many young people. Principals in schools in the three provinces visited during the study often reported about the fluctuating student population and the resultant loss of personal security by the students.

Although the data is very incomplete, some schools were closed for over one year and it is the feeling of the research team that many students did not return to school after the tensions. For many of those students who continued at school, a loss of self esteem as a result of failure in the examinations at school and the failure to find employment, significantly contributed to this loss of identity. Young people, mostly males, might appear on the streets to have bonded with fellow drop outs or 'push outs', but discussions with them quickly revealed that sitting around all day with little to do was ultimately boring, non-productive and depressing. Recent new options for entertainment and time filling resulting from a breakdown or rejection of traditional supporting structures, including gambling and drugs, only highlighted the worst features of urban alienation. This sense of identity loss was noted by the Peace Monitoring Council:

> *Drugs are becoming a problem. The young people have boundless energy yet they loaf around the streets, and have no outlet for their idealism.*
> *(Chair, Peace Monitoring Council & Ex Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands)*

Even young people themselves recognised the impact of the lack of personal trust. Writing in the Solomon Star essay writing competition, a student commented:

> *We must exercise solidarity... Peace and harmony is effective when members of each society recognize others as persons... It leads to a new vision of unity...*
> *(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newsaper essay writing competition)*

Adult stakeholders often recalled activities during their own schooling where they had explored, in simple ways, their own and their family's village identity. The rhetoric of the current national curriculum in the junior primary school continues to support this aspect of child development, particularly in the Community Studies curriculum. However, stakeholders within the education sector, believed that once the influence of the formal examination system began to take hold in the senior years of the primary school, all mention of individual personal growth disappeared from the curriculum. It was here also, they argued, that the study of cultural diversity in Solomon Islands, also disappeared from the curriculum. These adult stakeholders wanted culturally sensitive topics to be re-installed in the curriculum.

Teacher stakeholders were particularly critical of the type of local cultural material in the curriculum and the lack of teaching and learning resources available about the cultures from other provinces. They often commented that the materials did not encourage students to personally engage with the issues. They were not surprised at their students' lack of interest in the cultures of other provinces given students were not encouraged to learn about their own personal cultural customs and practices.

Dimension 3 : A Sense of Community

People generally live in communities and generally undertake some form of interaction with that community. This social behaviour of belonging is rarely simple, as a complex set of rules and customs determine membership to a community. In some cultures, the family, the village, the clan, for example, became the belonging unit to which members had both rights and obligations. These rights and obligations may have been both formal, like the obligation to defend the community in times of war, or informal, like an expectation to marry within the community.

One of the major complexities and contestables now facing communities in the twenty-first century is that the sense of locating oneself in a community has undergone profound changes. The Solomon Islands has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves. The most recent ethnic tensions, more obvious over the past two years, has only brought to the surface the sensitivities involved in attempting to cohere diverse communities in one location.

A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. Examples of where people in the Solomon Islands might locate themselves and therefore feel a sense of belonging and develop elements of social cohesion and citizenship include:

- Belonging within a family
- Belonging within a village
- Belonging within a clan
- Belonging within an island
- Belonging within a Province
- Belonging within the nation called Solomon Islands

Some very modern young people might also consider themselves to be also citizens of the world, and even of cyberspace where belonging to communities on the World Wide Web might have more significance than belonging to any other location. The issue in the Solomon Islands, as the ACFOA Report, noted, was one of a number of options or (changing) preferences:

> *Solomon Islands is a nation of villages, islands and cultural identities based on language and kinship. National identity is a recent phenomenon created by colonialism and maintained through post-independence institutions.*
> *(Report of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid Mission to Solomon Islands, August, 2000)*

All stakeholders, young and adult, commented on the complexities of identity in the Solomon Islands. When stakeholders were asked where they came from, the answer was invariably their kinship island. When referring to another person they would also always describe the person in the same way, for example, she is a Malaitan, and the label would always carry with it certain identity connotations. Student writings in the essay competition often referred to the tensions of community and therefore the impact it had on promoting social harmony and citizenship:

> *I come from the Western Province. I have my own language. But there should be a promotion of nationalism rather than regionalism... This does not mean that we do away with our home provinces but rather it is to create an inner feeling to see no differences regardless of who people are and where they come from...*
> *(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

A key stakeholder, the current Sogavare Government, in its Peace Plan 2000, has developed a number of strategic principles as a basis for national political, economic and social reconstruction. Three of these principles give some direction as to the government's sense of location.

Principle C: Respect and enhance human dignity and strengthen the building of the Solomon Islands

Principle D: Cherish and promote the different cultural traditions within the Solomon Islands

Principle E: Ensure the active participation of our people in the governance of their affairs and provide within the framework of our national unity for the decentralization of power

The related operational objectives include –

Objective G: Foster a greater sense of national unity and national identity
(Report of the Peace Plan, in the Solomon Star newspaper, May, 2001)

While recognizing that this is a party political document, Peace Plan 2000 does appear to acknowledge the duality of functions of government in both encouraging cultural diversity but at the same time framing this within a national boundary. Principle E might be taken to mean some form of a federation. There are a number of potential tensions in the Plan. As yet there is little government recognition that a critical venue for promoting these principles of cultural diversity and national harmony will be schools.

The locational tensions were invariably seen by adult stakeholders, particularly those stakeholders from the education sector, as a key element in any curriculum renewal. Their view was that the existing curriculum, and in particular the Community Studies and Social Studies curricula were totally out of tune with the current goals of national unity while respecting diversity.

> *Issues of social harmony are not clearly defined in the current curriculum... I believe that there is a need to have a culturally sensitive curriculum and to use local knowledge... With topics about peaceful harmony, respect for other peoples regardless of differences.*
> *(Head, Education Faculty, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education)*

Schooling in the Solomon Islands, with its national curriculum, is one of the few shared and common experiences for most young people. The data from stakeholders are overwhelming in their belief that the current national curriculum does not adequately and effectively include culturally sensitive topics of both provincial and national significance which would enhance recognition of cultural diversity and social harmony. The most common view was that the current national syllabuses of Community Studies/Social Studies in both primary and secondary schools is grossly outdated, being written in the early 1980s.

Teacher stakeholders frequently added that syllabus outlines were often missing in schools and could not be obtained from the Curriculum Development Centre in Honiara so they either improvised, mostly in collective ignorance, or left the subject completely out of the school curriculum. Teachers supported curriculum renewal in the key learning area of social education. A key issue for them in promoting social harmony was the total lack of teaching and learning materials about the cultural diversities of each of the Provinces in the Solomon Islands. The argument was often made by teachers that students often lacked a detailed understanding of their own island culture and that teachers who taught in Provinces not of their own background, lacked knowledge and teaching materials about the cultural practices of their school community. A more detailed discussion of the current curriculum and the role curriculum can play in promoting social harmony is included in Report 2.

Cultural harmony is unlikely to return to the Solomon Islands in the immediate future if questions of identity are not better understood and resolved. Stakeholders frequently commented that national leadership was needed in defining the nature of community in the Solomon Islands. A stakeholder, working in a rural training centre, was very aware of the political and social tensions embedded in location and why provincial governments only bring with them another layer of bureaucracy:

> *Since independence, the dominant issue has been location, resulting in community over unity, so confirming diversity... The Provincial governments have further split up the nation. We need faith in a national government. Provinces cost a lot more and can't provide the very local things people want.*

(Director, Don Bosco Training School)

These tensions, of course, have major political implications in terms of the structure of political divisions and the distribution of powers in the Solomon Islands. The debates about the desirability to extend the term of office of the current government are partly driven by a mistrust of government centred in the island of Guadalcanal and the perception that the government neglects the provinces in the distribution of services. This report is not the place to analyse these debates in detail. On the surface the debates appear to revolve around arguments of the law of the constitution defining the length of office versus the perception that, in the current climate, a longer period in office would enable the current government to maintain the momentum in achieving national goals. Another level of analysis would involve an understanding of the machinations of political ambitions.

All stakeholders saw education as being critical in fostering social cohesion and a national sentiment. The remaining issue was the extent to which regional or island communities could/should be integrated into the nation, perhaps even in some form of a federation. One student had a solution to this dilemma:

> *Schools should encourage their students to have a feeling of patriotism. During school assemblies, the whole school can sing the national anthem while the national flag is raised. This will give students a feeling of national identity and make them feel proud of their country. It will make them see that even though we are from many provinces we are still one country.*
> *(A Form3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

It should be added here that the research team did not see one national flag flying in any school during the field work. But then nor did we see a flagpole. When asked about the singing of the Solomon Islands national anthem in schools, every teacher or principal reported that it never happened.

Dimension 4 : Adoption of a Code of Civil Behaviours

Members of communities of all types operate within a code of behaviours which collectively form the values and customs and traditions of the community. Communities generally have ways and means of initiating new members into the community (and excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term,' civil society', describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by its members in order to maintain the code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin the code of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Examples of elements of common/core codes of behaviour which communities consider important include:

- Moral and ethical behaviour for self and towards others
- Respect towards and trust of cultural norms when they encompass diversity
- Mutual obligations, for example, to family, village, clan, country
- Practical application of codes of behaviour, for example, attendance at religious ceremonies, use of appropriate language, appropriate or traditional dress
- Peaceful co-existence with others

In the Solomon Islands the underpinning values of the numerous cultural groups are both multidimensional and complex. On the surface, the widespread acceptance of the teachings of Christian religions underpins much of the beliefs and behaviours of many people in the Solomon Islands. On the more complex side are the many and varied values and codes of behaviour which underpin village and island customs and traditions. 'Kastom' stresses traditions, continuity and respect for civilian leaders.

Recent ethnic conflicts in the Solomon Islands have clearly demonstrated that tensions now exist in the community(s) about acceptable codes of behaviour. Stakeholders in this study were unanimous about the breakdown of what they had considered to have been previously accepted codes of behaviour for a civil society. They also frequently commented that the

origins of the breakdown were of long standing and not just the product of some recent incidents of conflict. One stakeholder from the non-government vocational training sector noted that the tensions had produced some new elements of social disharmony:

> *People don't trust each other. This is a new factor... There has been a breakdown of discipline in schools. There are now arguments within groups, not with outsiders... and this has resulted in selected damage. People don't feel safe any more. We are worse now than before the coup because of the emergence of the criminal element*
> *(Executive Officer, Solomon Islands Rural Education Training Centres Association)*

Stakeholders in school communities from the far outer provinces commented on the impact of the recent breakdown of codes of behaviour on their local school community. School property was damaged, teaching and learning equipment was stolen. In one primary school in Guadalcanal, most syllabuses were stolen. This school has since had to struggle with only incomplete syllabuses with whole areas of the curriculum being omitted from school operations. While the resilience of these stakeholders continues to be tested, they overwhelmingly reported that their students, often coming from a range of provinces, rarely displayed anti-social behaviours towards fellow students from different ethnic backgrounds. It is the very young school age people who are actually still in school, who are the great hope for the future in the Solomon Islands.

As stakeholders, students passionately recognised the impact of the breakdown of acceptable behaviours:

> *I believe that it is the respect shown by each individual towards each other is the only tool that we can use to bind people together... Peace is something that we can achieve through the efforts of tolerance, forgiveness, mutual understanding of differences.*
> *(A Form 3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

The data collected from the student essays clearly indicated that young people have strong views and a firm grasp of the impact of the ethnic tensions. They came up with a wide range of key interventions, including government policies and actions, social policies and actions, religion and spiritual actions and very specific school-based actions. The contrast provided by a comparative analysis of the writings of the students, with their vast energies and ideas for social harmony, and an analysis of current school curriculum documents which suggest minimal opportunities for students to discuss let alone practice positive citizenship, is substantial. The great chasm between them indicates the urgency of curriculum renewal in social education in the Solomon Islands.

Dimension 5 : An Informed and Empathetic Response to Social Issues

As much as we might like to think that many communities operate as socially harmonious units, twenty-first century pressures emanating from individuals, groups and global forces, invariably impact on the daily practices and values of communities. These pressures, and the varied impacts they cause, simply cannot be ignored in a society already under considerable tension. Most communities engage in making some form of accommodations and adjustments to these pressures and issues. One of the tensions for communities and their education systems is the extent to which information and understandings about contentious social issues can be discussed within the communities. Even acknowledgement of the existence of issues such as AIDS, gender discrimination, teenage pregnancies, youth ennui and poverty immobilises some communities. An effective democratic community is one that encourages discussions about contentious social issues and addresses them using inputs from the community. Social cohesion will not be achieved in an environment of ignorance, prejudice and complacency. The recent reported increase in the use of drugs amongst the young in the Solomon Islands and even the now widespread use of outboard motors using high priced fuel, are just two other examples of changing practices which are placing pressures on traditional values and are creating a range of social adjustments. The widespread use of outboard motors (like the increasing use of solar power) empowers people to communicate more widely and travel far greater distances, perhaps to buy/sell goods, so

entering the commercial market place and perhaps in doing so experiencing cultural diversity first hand.

A sense of citizenship requires both an informed understanding of social issues and also a sensitive and empathetic response to the issues. The disposition towards social tolerance and mutual understandings cannot be fully developed with just an emotional response. It requires both a cognitive response and an attitudinal response. Some examples of social issues which adult stakeholders most frequently mentioned included:

- Issues of corruption in government
- Issues of an ineffectual public service
- Issues of social justice
- Issues of high youth unemployment
- Issues of the allocation of scarce resources, (particularly provincial demands)
- Issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism
- Issues of individual freedom versus the collective good.

Principals and teachers were more likely to refer to the issues on the earlier list of social issues, even though their students were confronted by such matters in the above list.

In a country which daily faces severe financial difficulties and which at the time of the second field visit in May 2001 publically announced its bankruptcy, the argument could be made that individual citizens do not have the luxury or the opportunity to be informed and care about the plethora of social issues surrounding them. The awareness of social issues as a dimension of citizenship has its focus on a state of mind, or a disposition, based on moral and ethical considerations. The management of attitude change is rarely simple. In the context of a society in crisis over a number of issues, and in a climate where there is much distrust and fear, there is the potential that the development of a positive disposition towards achieving the collective good has been replaced by self and family protection. Community issues like caring for the environment are unlikely to receive collective support in this climate. The acceptance by communities of open discussions about social issues are more likely to occur in the context of social tolerance and harmony.

Stakeholders working in the education sector frequently commented on the absence of Solomon Island social issues being squarely addressed in the current national curriculum. Issues frequently raised were drugs in the community, youth unemployment, exploitation and inequitable distribution of natural resources. Those stakeholders with specific curriculum development experience strongly supported the need for a more constructivist approach to curriculum development, so that students could learn skills in making their own meanings about social issues. Stakeholders in the education sector expressed the view that the secondary Social Studies curriculum, for example, was largely Euro-centred in content and any social issues such as the ones mentioned above are seen , if at all, firstly in a remote global context and then only incidentally in the context of Solomon Islands. Students are unlikely to understand, let alone be personally engaged with issues like the Berlin Wall and the Cold War. They are much more likely to be personally engaged in issues of cultural differences, for example, in music, between islands within the Solomon Islands. But no curriculum component on this sort of topic exists.

Student stakeholders frequently commented on the value of a relevant issues-based curriculum and suggested examples:

> *The schools should include peace curriculum... Programmes that will help the people about the importance of working together and building a better community through inductive teaching, learning self decision-making and through drama or social activities...*
> *(A Form3 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)*

These students not only identified the need for a more issues-based curriculum for their own purposes, but also broadened their discussion to include the issue of unemployed youth and the need for a more relevant curriculum for them:

> *We need our schools to focus on a curriculum to suit the working life of our community, especially vocational training... The government should set jobs for drop out students. Instead of roaming around and in the town, causes trouble...*

(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)

Stakeholders representing the voices of those who saw the current national curriculum as being 'too academic' and lacking a more appropriate focus on vocational skills, were vociferous in their condemnation of the examination system. They directly attributed some of the present social unrest, as demonstrated by the huge unemployment rate among young people, to a largely irrelevant national curriculum, exacerbated by the national examination system. These stakeholders believed the examination system was open to corruption and was socially divisive. Some of these stakeholders were instrumental in the rise of rural training centres run by non government organizations and with a focus on enhancing vocational skills of young 'push outs'. The manager of one newly opened church-supported rural training centre had a very clear vision of the role of such centres:

> *We realised we had to organise a sector that the government has ignored...We teach both a skill, but more important, discipline, commitment, honesty, as key values... Because there is a need for a civil society.*
> *(Director, Don Bosco Training School)*

Dimension 6: A Disposition to take Social Action

Asking the question, " What do you think education should be for?" is a provocative question in a discussion about the purposes of schools. The role of citizenship education in the school curriculum is like this big question in that it makes no sense at all if it lacks a purpose, or a practical application. Like the goals of education, the goals of citizenship are both contestable and problematic. An agreed vision of the world in which you hope young people might live happily and productively is needed, in order to give definition to conceptualising citizenship. It is a values clarification exercise; linking visions of the good life to the role education can play as an instrument of change.

Formal schooling is but one stage in learning, so to confine citizenship learning to the classroom divorced from the realities of the real world is largely a waste of time. There is little point in being a classroom citizen', because only a few people benefit from your actions. The bottom line for any effective social education programme is that students actually have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values which they willingly and purposefully offer to the broader community. In other words they become active contributors to their community. A 'good' citizen is one who does pick up rubbish in the community, who does vote, who actively engages in community affairs. In other words they take some form of action.

Some examples of how social action might be demonstrated by young people in schools include:

- Being actively engaged in community service
- Discussing with teachers how classroom activities might be organised
- Volunteering for positions in schools like form captain and prefects.
- Showing and taking initiatives in school activities.
- Placing posters like 'No More Guns' on school notice boards
- Willingly working with groups of students on class projects.
- Inviting speakers to their school to discuss social issues.
- Writing to newspapers about social issues.

There is now a large body of evidence that indicates that taking action mostly doesn't come naturally. (Knight,1999) School is an appropriate place in which young people can learn to take action. For young people, to develop a positive disposition to contribute to their community, they need to practice taking action, facing the consequences, and becoming contributing independent members of the school community. Schools need to develop structures and practices which allow young people to practice citizenship. When young people do not have experiences in showing initiatives and taking action, they lack a repertoire of appropriate actions from which to choose.

In this study, this dimension of citizenship received limited acknowledgement. Stakeholders from the education sector and usually with experiences of studying overseas were enthusiastic about child-centred learning, constructivist curriculum and the democratic classroom. One such stakeholder felt that he was a lone supporter of this approach to learning:

In my classes, especially in forms 4 and 5, I try to encourage student responsibility for their own learning. I expect my students to have opinions about current events. I think I can do this as well as getting good exam results... No, I don't think many other teachers in this school take this approach.
(Teacher of Social Studies at a secondary school, Western Province)

Field work observations of schools in three provinces in the Solomon Islands indicates that principals and teachers, while wanting their students to be independent learners, to show initiative in their own learning and to volunteer for types of community service around the school, rarely set in place school structures and practices which would allow this to happen. However an important caviat to this dimension of citizenship is that taking action is not always the norm in some cultures. In cultures like the Solomon Islands where respect for elders, for example, as the appropriate initiators of decision making is strong, passivity in the classroom could be misconstrued as lack of interest.

Time and again students in their essays wrote about ways of bringing about peace and harmony to the Solomon Islands and mentioned their willingness to actively contribute. One student wrote:

We need to take an active role in supplementing some of the services provided by the government and churches... But we need ethical leaders... We need awareness programmes for the leaders of tomorrow.
(A Form 5 student, writing for the Solomon Star newspaper essay writing competition)

Stakeholders who worked in the non-formal sector of education, for example, the rural training centres, were much more likely to support social action and support it themselves with action in developing initiatives which gave their students opportunities to demonstrate leadership, self-discipline and perseverance.

Like some of the other dimensions of citizenship which contribute to social harmony, acceptance of young people in taking on activities like community service is predicated on a cultural shift by principals and teachers. Teachers also often commented on how they were unable to take 'social action' to contribute to the decision-making processes in their school. These teachers then are unlikely to allow their students to share in the decision making processes of the classroom. Even principals felt severely restricted in being able to put their personal imprint on their school, because they were so inhibited by both provincial and national educational bureaucracies in what independence and innovation they could implement at their school. One principal, for example, was very enthusiastic about building a small and simple 'cultural centre' at his school for students to learn and practice local traditional customs. Students and parents had supported the idea but the provincial bureaucracy was reluctant to give permission. So here was a case of social action and a very worthwhile initiative to enhance social harmony in the local school community being thwarted by an insensitive bureaucracy.

SUMMARY OF SOLOMON ISLAND STAKEHOLDE ASSESSMEN & VIEWS

As a generalisation it is fair to say that stakeholders in the Solomon Islands acknowledged what the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education called, 'putting out bushfires' as the current approach to educational planning. In other words, the specific issues of the day, for example, trying to ensure that teachers were paid, took most of their energies and time. While the questions we asked and the discussions which ensued were actively participated in by all stakeholders, for most of them it was a luxury to have a breathing space to consider such questions like:

- What sort of world do you see children entering schools in the Solomon Islands in 2001 will encounter?
- What will these young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value?
- What will schools in Solomon Islands be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
- What are schools for?
- What are the national goals of schooling in the Solomon Islands?
- What are the priorities in the goals?
- What competencies is the system promoting for students?
- How can schools assist in the process of recovery, reconciliation and rehabilitation?

These were questions that the stakeholders acknowledged needed to be asked, but which were pushed aside by the exigencies of day-to-day activities. For this project to succeed in any form of quantifiable measure of effectiveness, these questions, at least, need to be addressed by stakeholders in the Solomon Islands. The focus of this project, the role of schools in enhancing social harmony and citizenship, very quickly embraced questions about the national goals of education of the Solomon Islands itself. This issue will be discussed in some detail in the third report. Any discussion of citizenship requires this broader discussion, and, stakeholders, be they professional educators or Form 3 students, recognised the importance of the project in terms of the achievement of social harmony as a major goal for the future well-being of the nation.

Specifically then, to address opinions towards 'cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes', the following points are offered as a summary of widely shared opinions of stakeholders in the Solomon Islands. Many of these points will again be discussed in more detail in the third report which has as its focus the development of a policy framework for education policy makers to consider in the review of current practices.

Points of consensus amongst stakeholders in the Solomon Islands

- There is universal agreement with, and support for, the need to enhance cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes in the Solomon Islands.
- There is a need for continuing debates about how cultural diversity and social tolerance can be enhanced within the nation, as people usually identify with provinces/islands before the nation of Solomon Islands. Community has over-ridden national unity.
- The recent 'tension' demonstrated an unwillingness by a small percentage of the population to accept cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes. Stakeholders acknowledged that the tension was a new phenomenon, but has a long and complex history. Recent events only exacerbated these long held tensions.

- The recent tension has created an air of distrust and fear of cultural diversity across ethnic groups, but there is also fear and aggravation within cultural groups. This will take some time and much effort, by all to overcome. Stakeholders see schooling, as the most common cultural experience as having a critical role to play in restoring social harmony.
- Stakeholders recognised the positive impact religion plays in the daily lives of most Solomon Islanders. They argued that any discussion about the enhancement of common core values, and in particular, social harmony, will need to be considered within the framework of Christian religious principles which pervades much of the life of Solomon Islanders. (The research team however found it very difficult during interviews to engage in an individual's personal commitment with religion. Stakeholders generally preferred to

talk in the collective sense about the impact of religion on the life of Solomon Islanders in general)

- Stakeholders in the education sector were mostly overwhelmed by the current financial crisis, which threatened national social stability. The current national financial crisis, they believe, will continue for some time to limit the extent of any policy changes and practices in education.
- The current national curriculum was seen by stakeholders in the education sector as being in need of major renewal in most areas of the curriculum, but particularly in the area of social studies where cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes should be a focus.
- Generally stakeholders considered the examination system as a 'given' and were unable to conceptualise other forms of measurement of student performance. At the same time they considered the current examination system and the consequent high drop out rate, or as it is also called 'push-out' rate, is a serious impediment to enhancing cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes.
- Stakeholders from the non-government organizations believed that the high youth unemployment, particularly in urban areas, and the lack of national government initiatives in vocational and rural training for unemployed youth highlights cultural differences in the community and has reduced social tolerance towards some ethnic groups.
- All stakeholders expressed the view that schools are currently totally under-resourced to enhance cultural diversity, social harmony and democratic processes.
- All stakeholders working in schools, higher education institutions and curriculum development centres, believe that there is currently a severe (and in some places, total) lack of teaching and learning resources, which accurately and sensitively reflect the many cultures of the Solomon Islands.
- Stakeholders outside of the education system were more likely to believe that the enhancement of cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes is not just the prerogative of formal education.
- Most stakeholders did not acknowledge the concept of the role schools can play in promoting democratic processes and as places where young people can practice citizenship.

SECTION 6: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON THE ROLE SCHOOLS CAN PLAY IN NATION BUILDING IN VANUATU

In accordance with the Terms of Reference of this study, the research team was to be

> *Responsible for collecting data from a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes.*

The data collected about Vanuatu stakeholders' views on the role schools can play in enhancing social tolerance and good citizenship has been categorised within Prior's six dimensions of citizenship as discussed above. This proved to be a useful coding framework for analysing the data. This process aids the qualitative nature of the study by allowing the voices of the stakeholders to be heard. No attempt has been made to quantify the data, as the number of stakeholders was relatively small at approximately 100, including those occasions when the researchers spoke with whole school staffs.

The order in which the six dimensions of citizenship are listed is not meant to be of any significance. It will become clear that they overlap. Collectively they frame the notion of a 'good citizen'. Where the data relate to specific aspects of curriculum and school-based practices, some brief analysis of school-based stakeholder comment has been included in this report. However a more detailed analysis has been included in Report 2, which deals with the operational assessment of school-based practices.

No attempt has been made to identify individual stakeholders as the total of the collective data is of more significance to the outcomes of this study. However when a particularly apt or typical comment was made by a stakeholder this has been quoted to allow the voice of the participants to be heard.

One qualification needs to be made about the cohort of stakeholders interviewed within the school sector. For a number of reasons the access to primary schools was very much more limited compared to secondary schools (See Attachment 1B). The research team became aware of this in the course of the fieldwork and made individual arrangements to discuss the project with some primary school communities. We do not believe that this situation significantly affects the findings of the three reports. However given the fact that approximately half of all students in Vanuatu finish their schooling at the end of primary school, we believe that more analysis of the primary school years is warranted. It is our observation, gained from discussions with stakeholders, that for 'some' time the greater emphasis in educational planning has been at the secondary level of schooling. If the recommendations of the Education Master Plan come to fruition then the emphasis may well swing back to the primary years of schooling.

Comments on Policy Contexts

The data collected from stakeholders in Vanuatu needs to be understood in the context of at least two significant policy contexts which impinged on views about the education system. Two areas of policy operations were regularly mentioned by stakeholders as being contextual to their thinking.

The first context was the current 'global' education policy direction associated with the Master Plan and the Comprehensive Reform Program. It was immediately apparent to the research team that the timing of this project in Vanuatu in relation to the current policy context needed consideration, particularly when interviewing stakeholders from within the education sector. Some understanding and explication of recent activities in policy development is necessary as a context to the views of stakeholders and in analysing their responses. It must be said from the outset that obtaining a full understanding of both the background and the specific details of recent policy developments has been difficult. Policy development in education is a reflection of broader government policy, and changes in government over the past 5 years have resulted in a number of different policy directions. For the research team, the changing roles of officials in the Ministry of Education, locating the

authorship and understanding of the current status of the policy documents, and analysing the impact on current policy and practice has been clouded in mystery.

Despite these difficulties for the research team, it is our view that key stakeholders in the Ministry of Education in particular (and occasionally some principals) appeared to frame their responses to the issues raised in the project within the context of these policy documents. As best as we can assess the situation, the following policy documents frame current thinking of stakeholders in the education sector. A summary of the key features of the policy documents and their publication dates follows.

February 1995: *School Effectiveness and School Improvement in the Pacific: Policy Planning Framework with a focus on School-level Outcome.*
(World Bank draft discussion paper :Referenced in other documents, but not sighted)

2 August 1996: *The Development of Year 7-10 Education in Vanuatu for the period 1996-2000, authored by* Task Force 2000. (Team Leader: George Andrews, Current Director General,)

- This study considered how years 7-10 education might fit into the second phase of the European Union Education Project.
- General recommendations linked to the Third National Development Plan
- Recommended two types of secondary schools - National (entry based on Year 6 examination results) and Provincial (entry based on location)
- Reform of the Curriculum Development Centre, especially the revision of curriculum materials
- Review of the Examination Centre Management, to establish goals.

7 October 1999: Education *Master Plan*
(No authorship acknowledged)

- Plan made within the mandate of Comprehensive Reform Program, launched in 2001 and endorsed at National. Summit, June 1997

Areas of planned activity:

- *Access* – basic education for 8 years for all children by 2010, establish vocational and distance education
- *Relevance* – linguistic, cultural heritage, identity, diversity, related to Vanuatu's economic and social development needs
- *Equity* – rural/urban
- *Language policy* – Constitutional requirements, increase use of indigenous vernacular languages, preserve English and French

November 1999: *Education Master Plan, Pilot Project,*
EDVAQ, Education Vanuatu: Vernaculars, Access, Quality : A Project of the Ministry and the Communities of Rural Vanuatu
(Project Director: Jessie Dick, Director of Policy and Planning Services, Ministry of Education)
Financed 1 July 2001 to 31 Dec. 2004.
Sponsor : World Bank
Aims :

- Introduce vernacular languages as language of instruction in pre-school and primary year 1, and in years 2-6 in Science and Social Studies
- Extend universal education to year 8,
- Establishment of Community Secondary Day Schools for years 7 and 8 only,
- New curriculum
- Improve quality of education, especially Years 2-6

15 March 2001: *Education 2000* – The Annual Report of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

- Major Planning focus of the report is on the implementation of the Pilot Project to test the first proposal contained in the Education Master Plan

June 2001: *Comprehensive Reform Program* (CRP)

- National government initiative focusing on good governance and parliamentary reform
- Series of meetings held at schools to explain the CRP to school communities
- Ni-Vanuatu focus, one nation, one people

- Need to learn about processes of government in schools
- Broad goals connected to the Education Master Plan

In the course of meetings with key stakeholders in Vila, the research team was given a copy of Education Master Plan by officers working in the Ministry of Education. The extent to which the Education Master Plan is known and has been discussed among other interested stakeholders in Vanuatu is uncertain. A minority of school principals, for example, reported widespread distribution of the Plan in 1999. Other principals and other community stakeholders reported never having seen or discussed it. This is the most canvassed view of the 1999 Education Master Plan. The research team noted a high degree of ambivalence or resigned indifference to the fate of the Education Master Plan. The slowness of implementation of the pilot has caused confusion about the demise of the Master Plan. Most stakeholders who knew of the Plan's existence believed that it was languishing in some bureaucrat's office. The most characteristic response was like this one, made by a principal:

> *Nobody talks about it*
> *(Principal, Francophone secondary school, Luganville, Espiritu Santo)*

It is the understanding of the research team that the Education Master Plan (EMP) provides detailed background data as a basis for a current submission to the World Bank for funding of the key elements of the Plan. We were unable to obtain any information about the current status of the submission from the World Bank consultant working in the Ministry of Education in Vila. It is our understanding that the World Bank may have approved the EMP, but the specifics of both its content and its implementation remain in the minds of only a very few senior bureaucrats. This was very disappointing as the writers of the Education Master Plan are very clear about the role of education in enhancing civic knowledge. In particular, these un-named stakeholders recognised the need for balance in any new education policies between the conservation of traditional values and positioning Vanuatu to effectively enter the global economy. Under the heading of Relevance, the Plan states:

1. We intend to use our education system to help us value and preserve our linguistic and cultural heritage, identity and diversity.
2 We intend to ensure that our education system provides the skills children need if they are to function in Vanuatu and in the wider world society and economy.
3. We intend to continue to improve our curriculum so that it corresponds ever more closely to Vanuatu's economic and social development needs.

While the above list of reports and documents may appear to be a disjointed list of policies and recommendations, it is a reflection of the current state of play in education in Vanuatu. It is the view of the research team that there is little evidence of a whole systems approach to educational policy formulation. It is argued in Report 3 that one of the reasons for this lack of direction, in our opinion, is the lack of a policy about national goals of education. The Annual Report of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (2000) does have 'Our Educational Mission", but it is mostly a list of strategies, not framed by national goals and aspirations. Therefore an understanding of the general educational policies in Vanuatu would require considerable more time than was allocated to this project. It is our view that a major impediment to coherent policy formation is competing interests within the Ministry of Education.

The second major significant policy context which impinged on stakeholder views of the social coherence in education was the examination system.

In Vanuatu there are a series of external examinations at the end of year 6 (when students are 11-13 years), again at the end of year 10 (when students are 15-17 years), and then at the end of year 12 (students about 18-20 years). Failure at grade 6 and/or year 10 examinations, result in an inability to further proceed in schooling. In 2,000, 4,824 sat the year 6 examination and 44.5% of these students continued into year 7. (This group was composed of 39.4% of all English language Year 6 students and 55.9% of all French language Year 6 students). Only 45% of those completing Year 10, continued at school into year 11, after successfully completing the year 10 examinations (*Education 2000 Annual Report,* 15 March 2001).

Overwhelmingly, stakeholders described the current system of examinations at the year 6 level as a 'culling process' which tested mainly the literacy competencies of students.

Stakeholders were aware of the drop out, or, 'push out' rate, of students and strongly commented on the anti-social impact this was having both on individual young people and on the nation as a whole.

A review of several examination papers at both year 6 (General Knowledge) and year 10 (Social Science) levels by the research team revealed that the questions were mostly directed at testing knowledge recall and the development of 'academic skills'. The high degree of literacy needed to enter the questions re-inforced the view of the examinations' emphasis on literacy skills. Stakeholders, even within the Examination Centre itself, were critical of the system.

> *The examinations test things that are on the syllabus. These things are often outdated. The exams are not assisting kids to learn about the social world.*
> *(Director, Examination Centre, Vila)*

Government estimates that of the total of some 3,500 young people who leave school each year, only 500 are able to secure paid employment. This represents about 14% of school leavers. All stakeholders acknowledged the significance of these figures and many commented how this situation worked against social cohesion in that it left young people, most of whom has finished only primary school, ill-equipped to make a contribution to their community as citizens.

The follow-up failure to find work, particularly for those young people living in towns, further contributes to a loss of identity. A teacher at a secondary school on the island of Espiritu Santo commented about the impact of the examination system, particularly for year 6 primary school students:

> *I think many young people see themselves early in life as failures. Then they go through a stage of wanting to stay in towns, then they feel they should go back to their village, even though they have few relevant skills. This is not good for Vanuatu as a nation.*
> *(Teacher of Social Studies, Matevulu College, Espiritu Santo)*

In summary, stakeholders both from within the education sector and in the broader community, saw the current examination system as firstly, being socially divisive, and secondly, as being an impediment to important social learnings. Some stakeholders at the very highest level of the educational bureaucracy, however, put the argument that the examination system should be seen in the context of the extent of available resources for post-primary education. In other words, the reality was that the country did not have the finances to support more students at the post-primary level and the examination system was a mechanism for determining the number of student who could be supported. Our response took at least two forms. Firstly, an analysis of the examination papers themselves (see Report 2) indicated that the examinations in their present form were not a valid or reliable form of determining which students should be given the opportunity for further education. Secondly, that, while recognising that there is clearly a finite source of funding and that there were many competing areas in need, savings could be made within the current system to allow for a greater number of students to proceed in to secondary education. One particular strategy might be to develop new types of schools, for example, comprehensive community schools, Prep –Year 8.

Dimension 1: Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge refers to those understandings about the civic processes in any community. This is not to imply that these processes will take exactly the same form in every community. For young people to contribute to, and participate in, decision-making processes, they need a well-developed understanding of the institutions involved and the actual democratic processes of engagement as they relate to the institutions and in their society. Examples of civic knowledge include:

- Understandings about the decision-making processes in the community, for example, the role of village chiefs, pressure groups, elections and voting
- Knowledge about civic institutions, for example, courts, parliament, schools, council of chiefs

- Understandings about the legal requirements and obligations of citizenship, for example, becoming a legal citizen, paying taxes, voting at elections
- Understandings about the historical and cultural contexts in which a community exists, for example, knowledge about different island cultures, use of vernacular languages.

Stakeholders in Vanuatu, both those who worked in the school system and those stakeholders who were outside of it, were unanimous in their views that schools did not give sufficient weight in the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum, to the acquisition of what they considered was relevant civic knowledge. Adult stakeholders charged schools with this civic knowledge responsibility. Generally stakeholders from the broader community felt that young people should have a sound understanding about government, parliament and democratic processes, although they were unclear if these topics actually appeared in the school curriculum. (They don't) On the other hand, stakeholders, both from within the education system and those who represented key community groups, were certain that the critical aspect of civic knowledge - understandings about Vanuatu's cultural heritage - was definitely ignored by the current curriculum and in other school practices. This lack of traditional cultural beliefs and practices was the most commonly voiced stakeholder view.

Some stakeholders had a particular perspective. An example of such a perspective is shown by the following comment from an official from the National Council of Chiefs:

> *Children today, particularly in towns, do not know about traditional customs. They do not know how the Chiefs work... They are losing their identity.*
> *(Secretary General, National Council of Chiefs)*

An official from the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, the repository of the nation's cultural heritage, was highly critical of the lack of civic knowledge. He affirmed this lack was regularly demonstrated by the large number of students who visit the Centre.

> *The history of Vanuatu and local culture needs to be taught in schools. It is not now happening. Children know little about traditional education systems, relationships, traditional conflict resolution strategies, trade, kinship groups, Chiefs, women's roles... This (civic knowledge) is central to social cohesion.*
> *(Director, Vanuatu Cultural Centre)*

Stakeholders working in the education system also supported the view that current policies and practices largely ignored the development of understandings which underpin the collective memories of communities. At a Francophone school in Vila a teacher commented:

> *The big problem in Vanuatu is that we don't know our history. We have a very skewed sense of identity.*
> *(Senior teacher of Social Studies, Francophone school, Vila)*

Students too, could remember few school experiences which assisted in the enhancement of civic knowledge and therefore enhanced their disposition towards social cohesion.

> *We never learned of the cultures of our island and we never raised the national flag or sang the national anthem ... I know nothing about government or our parliament.*
> *(Excerpt from a discussion, held in Luganville, with a group of young people who had recently left school)*

Some stakeholders' views of the lack of civic knowledge in the community did not confine their comments to young people. For them, it was an issue for the whole community.

> *The majority of ni-Vanuatu people have no knowledge of the law. The very word 'constitution' is often meaningless to people and is known simply as a public holiday.*
> *(Director, Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vila)*

Wan Smolbag is a community theatre group, founded in 1989, and currently employing about 90 persons. In their experience ni-Vanuatu also did not know their human rights, the life cycle of the turtle, the impact of over-population, traditional stories or the basics of family

planning. Wan Smolbags' aim was to create knowledge so people could decide to act to change their lives.

> *Knowledge is the pre-requisite to intelligent action, for or against change.*
> *(Director, Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vila)*

Stakeholders invariably had a number of explanations for this lack of civic knowledge. Their explanations were based on a belief that an understanding of the culture of decision-making processes of a community was a necessary prerequisite for a good citizen. Stakeholders from outside of the education system were often at a loss to explain how and why so many young people were both ignorant and uninterested in both traditional decision-making processes and current political activities. Life in towns, especially Vila, was often described as a major distracting factor for young people, for it was here that the values of the home village and community were most completely lost and forgotten. Students in Vila frequently had parents who had no knowledge of traditional culture. However it is important for policy makers to remember that town-based ni-Vanuatu (Vila and Luganville) form 21.5% of the total population. (1999 national census) The report, *Urban Growth: Implications for Primary Schools,* 2000) indicates that with the present urban growth rate of 5.6%, Port Vila's urban population is likely to double within the next 12 years. As reported in the 1999 census, approximately 44% of the population in Vila were under 15 years of age.

It is the view of the research team that there will need to be an education policy which acknowledges the make-up of at least two types of school populations. The urban-rural division, however, can be a false dichotomy, for there are those who have a foot in each lifestyle. Many people who work in Vila, do not, or cannot afford to live there, and commute daily from villages in the hinterland of Efate.

Key stakeholders within the education sector, including staff at the Vanuatu Teachers' College teaching in the social education area, officials at the Examination Centre and officials at the Curriculum Development Centre, could cite a number of factors inhibiting civic understanding among young people. These will be discussed in more detail in Report 2, but in brief they included:

- the restrictive nature of the examination system in Vanuatu
- the practice by the Ministry of Education of placing teachers to schools anywhere in Vanuatu so ignoring the opportunity to consolidate their home island traditions
- the failure of the Curriculum Development Centre to produce relevant teaching and learning materials
- the perception that government and parliament were self serving
- the politicisation and the failure to resolve (despite the Constitution) the issue of the language of the medium of instruction in schools.

The most common and the most passionate comments by stakeholders in the area of civic knowledge involved the perception that young people today in Vanuatu do not know about and understand the pre-European cultural civic traditions. All civic traditions have historical antecedents grounded in cultural customs and it was here that stakeholders believed most work needed to be done in schools. They strongly believed that social cohesion and harmony could be enhanced if young people had knowledge of, and respect for, both traditional and current community decision-making processes. The significance of this view is especially important in primary schools, given less than half of all primary school students are currently able to move on to secondary schooling.

Finally, a sound understanding of civic knowledge, per se, may not be a positive force in enhancing social harmony. If these understandings are acquired uncritically, then the collective memories of a community may well be static and may contribute to the continuing dominance of conservative elite. The Wan Smolbag Theatre, for example, recently organised a two-day workshop on Human Rights for a group of village chiefs. The 'law' that exists and is enforced on the islands of Vanuatu and often in town, is usually customary law and is dispensed by chiefs. The organiser of the workshop was interested in exploring the basis upon which the chiefs made their judgements and reported that:

> *None of them (the village chiefs) had read the constitution. Some had never seen it and no one really knew what was in it. None of them knew about recent Family Protection Bill.*

(Director, Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vila)
(The Family Protection Bill is directed at protecting women and children in cases of domestic violence)

Dimension 2: A Sense of Personal Identity

The psychological theories of the development of positive personal identity, or a feeling of self-worth, are well grounded in the belief that the level of an individual's self-esteem is critical to that person being able or wanting to relate or bond with another person or group. A willingness to empathise with, and be tolerant of, other diverse cultural groups or individuals is predicated on a sense of self worth and personal well-being. Examples of a positive sense of personal identity include:

- A feeling of personal security and belonging
- A willingness to trust other people
- A sense of efficacy
- A capacity for resilience
- Recognition of the origins of one's values and beliefs.

As a generalisation, the peoples of Vanuatu are friendly, compassionate and relaxed about themselves. This is particularly the case within family and village communities. It is also very noticeable in ni-Vanuatu relations with tourists.

There are some stresses however in the area of personal identity, and many adult stakeholders could identify areas of concern. In some cases they saw schools as having a major role in addressing these issues. In all cases it was argued that a young person was much more likely to be an effective contributing citizen if they were assisted in school to develop a healthy self esteem. Stakeholders argued that the development of a healthy and positive self-esteem was related to personal attributes and to life-long competencies like employment skills.

The Vanuatu National Council of Women, for example, noted the impact of what they saw as a highly-gendered curriculum in which inequitable treatment of females contributed to a loss of self-esteem among female students.

> *We want a peaceful place where happy people can thrive. Schools do not give fair treatment to female issues. We have produced excellent gender free materials but the (educational) system is not open to using the materials.*
> *(President, Vanuatu National Council of Women)*

Many adult stakeholders, but particularly those in Vila and Luganville believe that many young people living in these towns are suffering what they called a collective loss of self-esteem and a loss of direction in life. They commonly argued that this loss of identity in young people could be attributed to a perceived failure at school. The term 'push outs', was commonly used to describe the fate of these young people. This theme of personal alienation has been taken up in recently produced television documentaries. Produced by the Director of the National Cultural Centre, the documentaries used a series of personal life stories to explicitly persuade the viewing audience of the value of developing personal life skills and goals. It was argued that these could best be developed in villages rather than in towns. One young female person interviewed for the documentary commented:

> *I was lost for many years in town. I was not happy at school. I had few skills... The best thing I ever did was to go home to my village.*
> *(Excerpt from a discussion, television documentary, Vanuatu TV, 24 June, 2001)*

One principal had a clear idea about the need for schools to give opportunities for young people to explore their individual identities as a forerunner to developing skills and values as a contributor to the community. He believed that schools should actively promote social cohesion using these opportunities. This stakeholder's view was rarely repeated by other stakeholders.

We need to keep everything going. We believe in giving them tasks and for them to problem solve. The objective is to give skills, leadership, and decision-making experiences. We give them opportunities to be individuals and to be creative.
(Principal, junior secondary school, Tanna.)

Dimension 3: A Sense of Community

People generally live in communities and generally undertake some form of interaction with that community. In times past, this social behaviour of belonging was rarely simple, as rules and customs determined member to a community. The family, the village, the clan, for example became the belonging unit to which members had both rights and obligations. These rights and obligations may have been both formal, like defending the community in times of war, or informal, like an expectation to marry within the community.

One of the major complexities and contestables now facing communities in the twenty-first century is that the sense of locating oneself in a community has undergone profound changes. Vanuatu has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves and these new pressures have brought to light the sensitivities involved in attempting to cohere diverse communities.

A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. Examples of where people in Vanuatu might locate themselves and therefore feel a sense of belonging and develop elements of social cohesion and citizenship include:

- Belonging within a family
- Belonging within a village
- Belonging within a clan
- Belonging within an island
- Belonging within a Province
- Belonging within the nation called Vanuatu.

Some very modern young people, meeting at the Internet Café in Vila, might also consider themselves to be citizens of the world, and even of cyberspace where belonging to communities on the World Wide Web might have more significance than belonging to any other location. These represent a very small minority of generally highly motivated students.

All stakeholders, young and adult, commented on the complexities of community in Vanuatu. When stakeholders were asked where they came from, the answer was usually their kinship island. When referring to another person they would also describe the person in the same way, for example, she is from Tanna, and the label would always carry with it certain identity/community connotations. The complexities of developing a sense of belonging to a community are further increased with the tendency for people from outer islands to regroup with fellow islanders when they move into towns, so maintaining and enhancing and modifying the island/village network. Another layer of complexity results from inter-marriage across different village/island communities. One principal of a school in Vila commented on the urban nature of feeder families at her school. She noted how her families had links with a number of islands and did not often, if at all, return to their traditional village. The sense of community for these urban dwellers will be significantly different from that of rural village communities.

But very few of our students have ever been to their island and with the increasing inter-island marriage, which island do they come from? Their parents don't know their Kastom. It was their grandparents or great grandparents who came to Vila. We get students to interview their grandparents and see what they remember, old stories, songs... Very few of our parents actually have land or gardens and for those few who have a plot they are way out of Vila and they tend them very irregularly. These parents want their children to get a good job in town, and most of our parents keep working to be able to keep paying the (additional) fees to keep their children in school, so they can get those jobs.
(Principal, Primary school, Vila)

All stakeholders acknowledged the cultural diversity of Vanuatu. For them there were no negatives to this situation, it was rather a point of celebration. No one group was dominant

and there was enough of commonality between cultures to unite ni-Vanuatu. The values of respect, the family and the land were usually mentioned as the common foundation stones for mutual understanding throughout Vanuatu. Stakeholders went on to comment that it was their view that the current curriculum does not foster these common community values. Vanuatu is a country where the majority of people still spend their lives as subsistence farmers – the way of life of 70% of all ni-Vanuatu – outside the urban centres of Port Vila and Luganville. Rural communities have their own schools and kindergartens, and it was in the rural communities where stakeholders described schooling as largely irrelevant to the needs of most ni-Vanuatu communities.

One young male stakeholder, not long from leaving school after year 10, commented that when he returned to his village community after four years at secondary boarding school, he was ill-equipped for village life and wanted to return to Vila.

> *We learned little of our local custom. When I went back home I wandered around with my friends... I sometimes help my family in our garden. I like fishing... I would like to be a carpenter.*
> *(Excerpt from an informal discussion with a 17 year old person, Vila)*

Many stakeholders believe that cultural harmony can be enhanced in Vanuatu if the questions of identity and national community are better promoted at the political level. Stakeholders frequently commented that national leadership was needed in defining the nature of identity and community. Some young stakeholders commented on the divisions and current instability within governments and parliaments and the 'un ni-Vanuatu' behaviour demonstrated by members of parliament. A year 11 student commented:

> *You can't expect respect from students, if members of parliament do not act responsibly. We are not a community if they are not working together.*
> *(Year 11 student speaking at a Comprehensive Reform Program meeting at her school in Vila)*

It was argued that members of parliament often appeared to speak for particular groups in the community, but rarely for the nation as a whole. As result there is a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the national government's ignoring of local community issues and services outside of Efate and a growing sense of a loss of national identity. If this feeling continues it may give rise to significant social disharmony. One example of the flashpoint nature and the volatility of social disharmony was demonstrated in the two urban centres of Vila and Luganville in 1998 when riots occurred over the issue of government mismanagement of the Vanuatu National Provident Fund. During the time of fieldwork in Vanuatu there were regular letters to the editor and reports in Vila newspapers of incidents concerning the perceived abuse of political power by politicians in Vila in ignoring the aspirations of their community constituents. Social disharmony does not always need a major incident or crisis to bring dissatisfaction to the surface and a sense of a loss of community and belonging can have serious outcomes.

The strength of family ties in many ways assists young people in their personal well-being, both in the towns and villages. However many stakeholders believed that there has been a divergence in the values promoted by traditional family practices and those values promoted at schools and specifically in the school curriculum. Many parent stakeholders had an ambivalent attitude to the curriculum in the Primary schools. Ideally, primary schools might be seen as places where community values are 'anchored'. However parents often commented on what they saw as an inappropriate balance between teaching and learning of core community values, for example the learning of vernacular languages, and 'new western knowledge', for example, European forms of government in the Social Studies curriculum.

A sense of community can operate on a number of levels. Stakeholders, both from within the education sector and from community groups, acknowledged the critical role of education in promoting the socialisation into communities. The general belief was that the current curriculum and school system did little to assist young people to develop a sense of community. Community stakeholders bemoaned their lack of preparation for this future life.

The current policy which results in most secondary schools operating as boarding schools, and thus the physical removal of young people from their families and villages, was

considered by some stakeholders to be socially divisive. At a meeting in Espiritu Santo comprised of a mix of community representatives, one participant complained:

> *They have a different culture in distant boarding schools. Our children are away too long so that they become distant from our village culture.*
> *(Extract from a parent's comment, community meeting, Luganville)*

Some stakeholders believe that the practice of boarding secondary schools creates confusion among young people and detracts from them developing a sense of belonging. Some schools actively work to create a sense of school community and personal efficacy within it for individual students. But as evidence in Report 2 indicates there is great variation in what schools do to ease the transitions from village to boarding school and back to the village.

Dimension 4 : Adoption of a Code of Civil Behaviours

Members of communities of all types operate within a code of behaviours which collectively form the values and customs and traditions of the community. Communities generally have ways and means of initiating new members into the community (and of excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term a 'civil society' describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by its members in order to maintain the code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin codes of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need to come to some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Examples of elements of common/core codes of behaviour which some communities consider important include:

- Moral and ethical behaviour for self and towards others
- Respect towards and trust of cultural norms when they encompass diversity
- Mutual obligations, for example, to family, village, clan, country
- Practical application of codes of behaviour, for example, attendance at religious ceremonies, use of appropriate language, appropriate or traditional dress
- Peaceful co-existence with others

In Vanuatu, the values underpinning the civil society are both multidimensional and complex. Of critical importance to the maintenance of social harmony is the degree to which the many and varied codes of behaviour which underpin village and island customs and traditions can be accommodated across the nation. 'Kastom' stresses traditions, continuity and respect for civilian leaders The Chief system builds on these community values by offering a mechanism for both giving direction to, and management of, community civil behaviours. The system of Chiefs from the village level to National Council of Chiefs and the physical reminders of the system in the form of a community building in every village, the nakamal, is central to the traditions of ni-Vanuatu. It is here that the wisdom of the Chief establishes processes of conflict resolution supported by community values of conciliation and reconciliation.

Many adult stakeholders linked the values underpinning the Chief system with social tolerance and citizenship. One principal commented:

> *To be a good citizen is to respect others, not to create divisions. The system of Chiefs is based on respect for the wisdom of traditional behaviours. In Santo, Chiefs mainly deal with land disputes and domestic matters.*
> *(Principal, community high school, Luganville, Espiritu Santo)*

The extent of accommodation needed for the Chief system to be effective was noted by some stakeholders. In Vila the Chiefs, through a system of delegation, are still the first port of call by those seeking clarification or redress with some social (or economic) problem.

> *Each person knows who their Chief is and yes we would go to them first.*
> *(Employee, Internet Café, Vila)*

It is critical, of course, that Chiefs act within the codes of civil behaviour they represent and protect. There were a number of stakeholders reports of chiefs seeking to avoid

accountability for some of their illegal and uncivil actions. Communities cease to respect such persons (and the system of which they are a part) when hypocrisy is revealed, and stakeholders also gave examples of these responses.

The widespread acceptance of the teachings of Christian religions also underpins much of the beliefs and behaviours of many people in Vanuatu. In explaining the inter-relationship between Christianity and traditional values, the official from the National Council of Chiefs had a most accommodating comment:

> *Christianity is the light that shines on our culture.*
> *(Secretary General, National Council of Chiefs, Vila)*

The extent to which these two codes of civil behaviour co-exist frames the extent of social cohesion and harmony in Vanuatu. Stakeholders therefore often commented on the importance of the dual recognition of traditional cultural mores and Christian education in the school curriculum. One principal identified the impact of the dual values in framing civil behaviours, and for her urban school saw this as clear indication of a community in transition.

> *We encourage kastom stories. When our children show their kastom dances and stories their items are church orientated. That is, it seems to us that the kastom left is the Christian tradition. The dilemma for our teachers in this situation is how to encourage and enhance a generic ni-Vanuatu cultural tradition and identity.*
> *(Principal, primary school, Vila)*

Some stakeholders had doubts about the effectiveness of Christian education in some schools. Stakeholders from the Catholic Francophone system frequently expressed the view that a major difference between their schools and the Anglophone schools was in the provision of what they called 'moral education'. Thirty minutes per day are devoted in Catholic schools to developing the 'whole person', in which civil behaviours, like respect, family values, tolerance and community service are stressed.

> *There is little religious education in government schools, whereas we believe in the education of the whole person. Many young people therefore have no moral basis for their behaviour.*
> *(Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Education Office, Vila)*

An examination of Religious Education curriculum has been made (see Report 2) The research team was in no position to assess the veracity of these claims of difference, nor the effectiveness of the instruction in religious education. One observation we make, and one offered by some stakeholders, is that this expression of difference reflects and has the potential to inhibit social harmony. Visits to schools revealed that the inclusion, or not, of religious education in the curriculum, was a decision made at the school level, despite Ministry policy that it be regarded as compulsory.

The issue of competing religious traditions in Vanuatu is a serious impediment to the development of a comprehensive and whole system approach to establishing national goals of education. The current situation is very complex in that there is a separate Catholic school system; there are a smaller number of schools supported by other churches, for example, the Church of Melamesia and the Presbyterian Church; there are secular government schools; there are church schools receiving government funding while others do not; and there are Anglophone schools and Francophone schools within the above groupings. The chances of developing a common set of codes of civil behaviours in this context are further exacerbated by the divergences brought about by cultural, ethnic, linguistic and geographic traditions.

A minority of stakeholders had some doubts about the impact of the two dispensers of civil behaviour codes in Vanuatu – the Churches and the Chiefs. They argued that both acted as conservative rule making forces with a result that individual ni-Vanuatu were generally reluctant to show initiatives, to question authority and to take social action. Many teacher stakeholders were concerned that although respect was a foundation stone for the creation of social cohesion and mutual understanding in Vanuatu, this cultural tradition often took the form of passive learning in classrooms. This operational aspect of civil behaviour is further discussed in Report 2. One principal commented:

Students are not active talkers; they generally wait for the teacher to generate learning. Teachers have to engage students. Ni-Vanuatu are quiet, they respect others and this can be a barrier to active self-directed learning.
(Principal, Francophone government school, Luganville, Espiritu Santo)

This has the makings of a dilemma. On the one hand the preservation of culturally based behaviour patterns is very important. On the other hand, the acceptance of an approach to teaching and learning by both teachers and students which asserts student directed learning is culturally divergent. This approach affirms strategies such as co-operative learning, the promotion of curiosity, questioning and initiative, problem solving skills, and active participation in classroom activities as the best way to create well-informed and contributing citizens. A passive young citizen is more likely to expect, as an adult, for authorities to initiate activities, rather than expect to be part of the decision-making.

Dimension 5: An Informed and Empathetic Response to Social Issues

As much as we might like to think that many post-colonial communities operate as socially harmonious units, twenty-first century pressures emanating from individuals, groups and global forces, both from within and from outside, invariably impact on the daily practices and values of communities. These pressures and the varied impacts they cause simply cannot be ignored and most communities engage in making accommodations and adjustments to these introduced pressures and issues. One of the tensions for communities and their education systems is the extent to which information and understandings about social issues can be discussed within the communities. Even acknowledging the existence of issues such as youth ennui, teenage pregnancies, health issues such as AIDS, gender discrimination, poverty immobilises some cultures. An effective democratic community is one that encourages discussions about contentious social issues and addresses them using inputs from the community. Social cohesion will not be achieved in an environment of ignorance, prejudice and complacency.

A full sense of citizenship requires both an informed understanding of social issues and also a sensitive and empathetic response to the issues. The disposition towards social tolerance and mutual understandings cannot be fully developed with just an emotional response. It requires both a cognitive response and an attitudinal response.

Some examples of social issues which adult stakeholders most frequently mentioned included:
- Issues of land ownership
- Issues of decision-making processes
- Issues of social justice
- Issues of the allocation of infrastructural services (particularly provincial demands)
- Issues of cultural diversity and multiculturalism
- Issues of individual freedom versus the collective good
- Issues of caring for the environment.

Principals and teachers were more inclined to reference the earlier list of social issues, even though their students were confronted by such matters in the above list.

In a country which daily faces severe financial difficulties, the argument could be made that individual citizens do not have the luxury or the opportunity to be informed about the plethora of social issues surrounding them. The awareness of social issues as a dimension of citizenship has its focus on a state of mind, or a disposition, based on moral and ethical considerations. The management of attitude change is rarely simple. In the context of a society in transition/adjustment, there is the potential that the development of a positive disposition towards achieving the broader collective good can be replaced by self and family protection. Community issues like caring for the environment are unlikely to receive collective support in this climate. The acceptance by communities of open discussions about social issues are more likely to occur in the context of social tolerance and harmony.

Stakeholders working in the education sector, in particular teachers of Social Studies strongly believed that social tolerance and citizenship could be enhanced both by classroom practices and whole school approaches. They frequently commented Vanuatu social issues not being squarely addressed in the current national curriculum. It was often pointed out that students who were ill-informed, or indifferent, to social issues were unlikely to make a contribution to

the community as adult citizens. One teacher made the interesting observation that the only issues currently included in the Social Studies curriculum were not treated as social issues.

> *Social issues get omitted (in the exam), as yet not examined. Social issues that are included in the examination are 'commercial', for example, tourism, which is discussed in economic terms only.*
> *(Senior teacher of Social Studies, government secondary school, Vila)*

It was the observation of the research team that the major stakeholder in Vanuatu currently addressing contentious social issues is the Wan Smolbag Theatre. This community theatre group has written and performed plays on health and environmental issues, historical and cultural themes, gender issues, decision making, disability issues, population and family planning, youth unemployment and corruption and politicians. The director and founder strongly supported the role of drama in informing people about social issues.

> *Person to person contact through live theatre is, we believe, the most effective way of getting the message across and given the poverty of people in villages, sometimes the only way.*
> *(Director, Wan Smolbag Theatre)*

The Director argued that the major role of the group was to assist in the promotion of social harmony by squarely addressing contentious social issues in a culturally sensitive manner. He was critical of the absence of the Arts in the school curriculum, and in particular the absence of drama. The research team attended a production of 'The Old Stories' by the Wan Smolbag Theatre. The ni-Vanuatu response to the production was total engagement. Though this stakeholder group already has school and young people's programs, it has enormous potential to be a major innovator in the way schools and society more widely address social issues

Those stakeholders with specific curriculum development experience strongly supported the need for a more constructivist approach to curriculum development, so that students could learn skills in making their own meanings about social issues. These same stakeholders pointed out that currently there is no person at the Curriculum Development Centre in Vila with responsibilities for Social Studies, that there has been no meetings of teachers of Social Studies since 1995, that the current Social Studies syllabus still reflects its 1980's origins, and that most schools do not have a full set of Social Studies curriculum materials. These issues are discussed in more detail in Report 2.

Stakeholders from the Teachers' College strongly supported an approach to the teaching of social issues which actively engaged student teachers in discussing social issues. However they also commented that they constantly faced an up-hill battle because most of their students brought with them experiences of school which did not encourage activity based learning about social issues. They did not feel (or possibly even wish to be) competent in dealing with social issues in a student focussed pedagogy. It was the experience of these stakeholders from the Teachers' College that although you could point to a range of topics in the current Social Studies syllabus that had cultural matters as a focus...

> *...what you do in your school is conditioned by what is examined. This works against the objectives of your World Bank project. Student teachers come to us with few school experiences of student based learning and little understanding about, or interest in broad social issues.*
> *(Lecturer in Social Studies, Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila)*

There were many examples of teacher practice where the active promotion of social harmony and citizenship was a regular feature of their approach to teaching and learning. These were the stakeholders who not only supported the goals of this project, but also were sufficiently competent and confident to engage students of Social Studies in secondary schools, despite the constrictions of the examination system. At a meeting of four such teachers there was unanimous support for the inclusion of a more issues-centred approach to teaching and learning about social harmony.

> *There is a little, but, very small section of the syllabus about social harmony and citizenship... There are no oral traditions, no story telling in the syllabus... Our*

teachers are complaining that there should be a lot more about relevant social issues...We take our students to Parliament. We teach about elections in year 9.
(Meeting with four Teachers of Social Studies at Malapoa College, Vila)

In Vanuatu, as a result of the organization of visits to schools, there were very limited opportunities to meet and discuss the issues of the project with student stakeholders. There were no opportunities to meet with primary school students. On the few occasions where this was possible, sometimes in the form of informal street conversations, students showed an almost total ignorance and, some indifference, to the issues of social cohesion and citizenship. There could be a great many explanations for this attitude and unfortunately the researchers cannot offer further insights into this aspect of the project, though one can readily hypothesise as to the cause.

Any suggestions for amending the existing curriculum in Vanuatu, have implications, both in terms of funding support and re-training of teachers. By making the curriculum more constructivist and issues-based, there will need to be a change in the teaching and learning culture of teachers at both the trainee teacher level and at the experienced teacher level. Discussions with teachers during field work however sometimes revealed the opinion that a very creative teacher could fulfil the expectations of the examination system while at the same time exposing students to genuine enquiry learning using local social issues.

Of course the examinations dominate what I do. However I incorporate active citizenship elements into my classes. For example, I believe group work and discussion of social issues makes for effective citizens.
(Teacher, primary school, Luganville, Espiritu Santo)

These are the sort of teachers who can become leaders, tutors, change managers and network co-ordinators in the promotion of social harmony in their school district. It will be necessary for the Ministry of Education to locate these exceptional teachers and incorporate them in any professional development programs they develop.

A detailed discussion of the Vanuatu examination system is not directly relevant in this section of the report though a description of it and some effects flowing from it have been provided in Section 3 in this report. However, stakeholders at the Vanuatu Examination Centre had strong views about social learning and especially the role that examinations could play in enhancing social learning.

The current curriculum is not teaching kids about the social world. The Ministry of Education hasn't really got aims, or clear goals. We need to ask the community about priorities of social learning.
(Director, Examination Centre, Vila)

The continuation of external examinations at Year 6 and Year 10, with their focus on only some subjects in the curriculum and then mostly on knowledge recall, is profoundly counter-productive to sensitising young people to relevant social issues of the day. Many adult stakeholders openly acknowledged the role of the examinations, particularly in year 6, as a 'culling process', creating more of a 'push out', than a 'drop out'. Moreover the impact of dividing the community into winners and losers is counter-productive to enhancing social harmony. It creates a climate, and an expectation that citizen removal is at best inevitable, at worst is socially and economically desirable.

Dimension 6: A Disposition to take Social Action

Asking the question, " What do you think education should be for?" is a provocative question in a discussion about the purposes of schools. The role of citizenship education in the school curriculum is like this big question in that it makes no sense at all if it lacks a purpose, or a practical application. Like the goals of education, the goals of citizenship are both contestable and problematic. An agreed vision of the world in which you hope young people might live happily and productively is needed, in order to give definition to conceptualising citizenship. It is a values clarification exercise, linking visions of the good life to the role education can play as an instrument of change.

Formal schooling is only one venue for social learning, so to confine citizenship learning to the classroom, divorced from the realities of the real world, is largely a waste of time. There is little point in being a classroom citizen, because only a few people benefit from your actions. The bottom line for any effective social education program is that students actually have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values, which they willingly and purposefully offer to the broader community. In other words they become active contributors to their community. A 'good' citizen is one who does pick up rubbish in the community, who does vote, who actively engages in community affairs. In other words they take some form of social action.

Some examples of how social action might be demonstrated by young people in schools include:

- Being actively engaged in community service
- Discussing with teachers how classroom activities might be best organised
- Volunteering for positions in schools like form captain and prefects
- Showing and taking initiatives in school activities
- Willingly working with groups of students on class projects
- Inviting speakers to their school to discuss social issues
- Writing to newspapers about social issues.

There is now a large body of evidence that indicates that taking action for most people doesn't come naturally (Knight, 1999). School is an appropriate place in which young people can learn to take action. For young people to develop a positive disposition to contribute to their community, they need to practice taking action, facing the consequences of those actions, and becoming contributing independent members of the school community. Schools need to develop structures and practices which allow young people to practice citizenship. When young people do not have experiences in showing initiatives and taking action, they lack a repertoire of appropriate actions from which they can choose. The sociology of riots suggest, for example, that some people participate because they know of no other way to indicate their feelings.

However an important caveat to this dimension of citizenship is that taking action is not always the norm in some cultures. In cultures like Vanuatu where respect for elders, for example, as the appropriate initiators of decision-making is strong, passivity in the classroom could be misconstrued as lack of interest.

It is the observation of the research team that schools in Vanuatu rarely give students opportunities to engage in significant decision-making activities (see Report 2). As mentioned previously, there are cultural factors at work here, with students much more likely to show respect by waiting for the teacher to initiate activities. As a result, this dimension of citizenship received limited acknowledgement in this study.

However some school principals and staff took a pro-active view of the links between values and social action.

> *The official curriculum does little to promote our cultural values. However our students are taught ni-Vanuatu values – they will leave a class of their own accord to approach a stranger near their territory (that is in the school yard) Ni-Vanuatu custom says no stranger is left to stand outside the door.*
> *(Principal, junior secondary school, Tanna)*

Some stakeholders from the education sector and usually with experiences of studying overseas were enthusiastic about child-centred learning, a constructivist curriculum and the democratic classroom, as teaching and learning approaches which enhanced social tolerance and citizenship. But this was a minority view. Their training and experience does not pre-dispose them to these approaches.

The plays developed by the Wan Smolbag Theatre deal with acute social issues, are provocative and are designed to gain a response. Discussion of issues always follows the play, so that the audience community begins to own the problem. Social, community action strategies are often developed. Decision-making flows quite naturally, once the need for action is seen by individuals and communities.

Like the other dimensions of citizenship, engagement in activities like community service and taking social action by young people is predicated on the cultural values of the community. In Vanuatu, stakeholders often commented on the importance of respect and traditions as values underpinning relationships and decision-making in communities. Teachers, too, in some schools, commented on how they were unable to contribute to the decision-making processes in their school. They argued that the culture of decision-making, in schools and also in the Ministry of Education, reflected a hierarchical, top down model. When decisions were not transparent and the decision-makers are not held accountable, as the teachers often related, the traditions of respect were undermined and morale declines. The inclination to question or attempt to engage in changed practices is diminished in such a climate. These teachers are unlikely to encourage their students to share in the decision-making processes of the classroom. Principals, too, felt restricted in their ability to put their personal imprint on their school. Their view was that they were inhibited by both provincial and national educational bureaucracies in the initiatives they could introduce at their school. Corruption and the lack of transparency by government and those in power seriously affects a community's preparedness and capacity to address the issues.

Stakeholders from the Education Sector

All stakeholders from the education sector – administrators, principals, teachers, and students readily acknowledged the importance of social tolerance and communal harmony in Vanuatu. Students needed some prompting about the role that schools might play in enhancing social harmony and citizenship, but they were very clear in their views that their schooling had not engaged them in extended discussions about traditional ni-Vanuatu values and traditions. Other stakeholders in the education sector initially responded during interviews that there were numerous other issues of more significance. Ministry of Education officials, for example, as a stakeholder group, appeared to be generally overwhelmed with the organisational issues of the day, most particularly the existence of sufficient funds to keep the system running. The focus of this study appeared to them to be on a different level to these administrative issues. However, as the project progressed and contacts between the officials from the Ministry and the research team developed, the officials saw the many connections between the focus of the study and their work duties.

Stakeholders at the Teachers' College, who taught Social Studies strongly believed that the promotion of social harmony and citizenship were essential objectives in this curriculum area and based much of their courses around these goals. They commented that pedagogies that supported social harmony in classrooms were regularly modelled in their classes at the Teachers' College.

Teachers of Social Studies in schools spoke the same conceptual and philosophical language as the research team. They were able to clearly articulate the role school administrations, Social Studies, and other curriculum areas like Religious Studies and Technology Studies, could play in promoting a civil society. As a stakeholder group they were a most impressive in their energy and perseverance. They were, however, highly critical of existing policies. In particular, current teaching and learning resources produced by the Curriculum Development Centre were considered to be largely irrelevant for ni-Vanuatu, or at best, outdated. Teacher stakeholders often also added that syllabus outlines were often missing in schools and could not be obtained from the CDC in Vila, so they improvised, mostly in collective ignorance. One teacher in Luganville reported that:

> *Last year's year 7 teacher only covered two topics in Social Studies, as we did not have a copy of the syllabus. I am trying to catch up this year in year 8... I only obtained a copy of the Social Studies Syllabus (years 7-10) last week (that is, June 2001)*
> *(Teacher of Social Studies in Junior Secondary School, Luganville)*

Principals as a stakeholder group, were very receptive to discussions about the role schools might play in promoting social tolerance and citizenship. However, this support was mostly in principle, as there was little evidence of whole school approaches to social education. The conclusion often drawn by the research team was that principals were not able to develop whole school plans for their schools because there are no Ministry of Education goal statements to guide and frame their thinking. This issue will be discussed in more detail in Report 3.

Most stakeholders in the education sector were very keen to point out to the research team the negative impact of the examination system on social learning. This issue will be discussed in more detail in Reports 2 and 3. In summary, stakeholders believed that the examinations at year 6 and 10 were mostly literacy mechanisms for culling out students who were deemed to be unsuited to further proceed with higher levels of schooling. They condemned this system as being socially divisive, resulting in the majority of students being pushed out of schools at such an early age that they were lacking understandings and skills necessary for making a contribution to their communities.

Community Stakeholders

Community stakeholders interviewed in this study saw a need to explicitly address social harmony and citizenship issues in Vanuatu and viewed schools as a central agency through which to access the issues. The diverse range of stakeholder groups all considered the current education system did not adequately and effectively include core cultural values and traditions in the curriculum. They were of the view that social learning in schools was largely based on colonial precepts and did not give enough attention to traditional ni-Vanuatu concerns. Their view was that the current national curriculum did not include culturally sensitive topics of both provincial and national significance which would enhance recognition of cultural diversity and social harmony. For this group, social tolerance and cultural harmony were part of the foundation values of ni-Vanuatu.

At the heart of their arguments was the belief that education administrators rarely sought their views in developing policy. A number of these community stakeholder groups had produced curriculum and teaching materials but they had so far received little support by education officials in assessing their value for use in the current curriculum. They believed that this lack of consultation with, and interest in their views, by education policy makers has undermined traditional ni-Vanuatu culture and has exacerbated social divisions in Vanuatu.

The views of these community stakeholder groups should not be seen in terms of wanting only to reshape schools around traditional ni-Vanuatu values. Like stakeholders in the education sector, they have their goals set on some form of balance, of accommodation, of adjustment to the impact of new social and economic pressures on Vanuatu. The emphasis to their attitude to the role schools can play in promoting social tolerance and citizenship is a more 'ni-Vanuatu' approach.

A final summary point often mentioned by stakeholders, both within the education sector and in the community, was the perception of a disjunction in roles and communication between key divisions within the Ministry of Education. At the centre of this view was the argument that the accountability and transparency of decision-making in the divisions was rarely apparent. In particular, the roles and relationships between officials at the Ministry of Education office, the Curriculum Development Centre, the Examination Centre, the Teachers' College, Church-based Education Centres, Provincial Education Officers, and NGO informal education centres, were regularly cited as needing urgent clarification and discussion with the community.

Points of consensus amongst stakeholders in Vanuatu

In the course of this study the research team held discussions with over 100 stakeholders in Vanuatu. As expected a range of views were expressed about the role of education in promoting social harmony. However, it transpired that there was a great convergence of views and the following list summarises the points of consensus among stakeholders.

- There was universal support for the need to enhance cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes in Vanuatu.
- There is a need for continuing debates about cultural diversity and social tolerance can be acknowledged and enhanced within Vanuatu.
- Any discussion about the enhancement of common core values, and in particular of social harmony, will need to be considered within the framework of Christian religious principles which pervades much of the life of ni-Vanuatu.
- The enhancement of cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes is not just the prerogative of formal education.
- High youth unemployment, especially in towns, and the low priority given to initiatives in vocational and rural training for unemployed youth has created social division by exacerbating cultural and regional disparity in the community and has also highlighted rural/urban differences.
- The current national financial situation will continue for some time to limit the extent of any policy changes in education.
- Schools are currently totally under-resourced to enhance cultural tolerance, social harmony and democratic processes.
- There is currently a serious lack of teaching and learning resources which accurately and sensitively reflect the many cultures of Vanuatu.
- The current national curriculum is in need of major renewal in most areas of the curriculum, but particularly in the area of social studies in which cultural diversity, social tolerance, citizenship and democratic processes should be a focus.
- The use of the examination system as a culling tool is a serious impediment to enhancing cultural diversity, social tolerance, and democratic processes.

The interviews of key stakeholders in education in Vanuatu generated a very large amount of data. The research team believes that the findings presented in this report accurately reflects the views of these stakeholders. There is now strong evidence, for example, feed back from participants at the reflective workshop, to support the view that the stakeholders also affirm the findings.

Discussions have continued with key policy makers in the Ministry of Education about the many issues generated by the project. At the beginning of the study it was the view of the research team that Terms of Reference for the project would invariably lead to broader issues beyond questions of social tolerance and citizenship. And this is what happened. Policy makers in Vanuatu have taken up the challenge to address the broader issues generated by the project. Some of these issues below were actively discussed at the reflective workshop and it is the view of the research team that they must be considered before the formulation on new policy.

- What sort of world do you see children entering schools in Vanuatu in 2001 will encounter?
- What will these young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value?

- What will schools in Vanuatu be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
- What are schools for?
- What are the national goals of schooling in Vanuatu?
- What are the priorities in the goals?
- What competencies is the system promoting for all students?

The inclusion of a reflective workshop as a key strategy in this project gave an opportunity for key stakeholders to reflect on the values and assumptions that underpinned their policies and practices. The focus of this project, the role of schools in enhancing social harmony and citizenship, very quickly embraced questions about the national goals and identity of Vanuatu itself. This issue will be discussed in some detail in the third report. Any discussion of citizenship requires this discussion, and stakeholders, be they professional educators, students or parents recognised the importance of the project in terms of the achievement of social harmony as a major goal for the future well being of the nation.

Warren Prior (Project Manager)

Suzanne Mellor (Researcher)

Graeme Withers (Researcher)

WORLD BANK PACIFIC ISLANDS PROJECT

PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 1 : Stakeholders' Assessment

Attachments

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

July 2001

Deakin University

And

Australian Council for Educational Research

Attachment 1 (A) FIELDWORK IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Researchers : Warren Prior, Graeme Withers

List of Stakeholders Interviewed in Solomon Islands

Guadalcanal Province

- Walter Ramo – Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Training
- Donald Malassa – Under Secretary, MoE & T
- Mailyn Cuve – Director, Planning MoE & T
- Bob Cogger – Education Advisor, AUSAID
- Bernard Rapasia – CEO, Vocational Education MoE & T
- Joash Maneipuri – Head, Education Faculty, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
- Franco Rodie- Director, Curriculum Development Centre
- Director National Art Gallery
- Moffat Wasuka – Education Consultant
- Fr Norman Arkwright – Chair, SIRETCA, parish priest, Tanagua
- Catherine Lamani – Manager Solomon Star newspaper
- Fr Ambose Pereira – Director, Don Bosco Training School
- Francis Taqua – Designate Provincial Director, Makira Province
- Peter Keneilorea – Chair, Peace Monitoring Council (ex Prime Minister)
- Peter King – Executive Officer, Solomon IslandsRural EducationTrainingCentres Assoc.
- Sr Margaret - Deputy Principal, Bishop Eppale School, Rove
- Collin Ruqebatu – Head Teacher, Bishop Eppale School, Rove.
- Charles Fox – General Secretary, National Youth Congress, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Secretary of the Citizenship Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs
- National Teachers' Union
- Fox Irokmani – Education Officer, Non-Fomal Education, Church of Melanesia.
- Ethel Sigimanu – Head of Women's Development, Women in Development. Division.
- Joshua Leitavua – Principal Ruavatu Secondary. School
- Charles Pigoa – Chief Education Officer (Guadalcanal. Province)
- Gideon Moses – Former Premier Guadalcanal Province
- Leonard Nekamale – Education Cleric, Guadalcanal Province

Western Province

- Ms. Dalcy Sito - Western Province Inspector, Ghizo
- Mr Stewart Sione - Principal of Gizo Primary School
- Mr. Piani Lilopio - Principal, Gizo Community High School
- Nicksin Kaepori – Social Studies teacher, Gizo Community High School,.
- Kenny Jerry – Social Studies teacher, Gizo Commun ity High School.
- Students - four Form 5 girls, Home Economics class, Gizo Community High School
- Mr. Binnet Mavo – Senior Education Officer, New Georgia Region,Western Province
- Mr. Bartlett Julesaba – Education Secretary, United Church, Goldie Secondary College,
- Ms. Miri Taqu Tuke – Acting Principal, Goldie College, Western Province
- Jino Hansome Here – Social Studies Coordinator, Goldie College, Western Province
- Mr. Eki Lee Daga - Chief Designate, Dunde Community-Munda, New Georgia.
- Mrs. Judy Riko Naqu – Principal, Dunde Community High School, Munda
- Anna Teko – student, Community High School, Munda, Western Province.

Malaita Province

- Principal, Su'u National Secondary School.
- Senior Social Studies teacher, NSS
- Principal, Arnon Aitomea Community High School
- Social Studies Teacher, CHS
- Principal Auki Primary School
- Deputy Principal PS
- Grade 6 Teacher, PS.
- Inspector, Malaita Province
- Education Officer, Malaita Province

Attachment 1 (B) FIELDWORK IN VANUATU

Researchers: Warren Prior, Suzanne Mellor

List of Stakeholders Interviewed in Vanuatu

Efate Island

- Kalmele Matai – Director of School Education Programs, Ministry of Education.
- Jessie Dick – Director, Policy & Planning.
- Peter Gibbons – Consultant & Director of Vanuatu Master Plan, Ministry of Education.
- Thomas Simon Maraketere – Director of Secondary Education, Ministry of Education.
- Charles Silas, Executive Officer, Ministry of Education.
- Charlie Roberts – Examiner Grade 6 General Knowledge, Ministry of Education.
- David Tari – Director, Rural Education, Ministry of Education.
- Tony Austin – Team Leader Vanuatu-Australia Secondary Teacher Education Project, Vila.
- Charles Pierce – Lecturer in Social Studies VASTEP, Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila.
- Andrea Hinge – Lecturer in Social Studies VASTEP, Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila.
- Jacque Gideon – Principal, Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila.
- Eric Natuowi – Lecturer in the Arts, Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila.
- Lidcha Nanuman – Lecturer in Social Studies (primary), Vanuatu Teachers' College, Vila.
- Sue Buereleo – Director, Curriculum Development Centre, Vila
- Tasua Tasale – Deputy Director, Curriculum Development Centre, Vila.
- Louis Toukone – Acting Principal, Malapoa College, Vila.
- Margaret Toukone- Head of Social Studies Department, Malapoa College, Vila.
- Mailyn Ngwelle – Director, Examination Centre, Vila.
- George Kuse – Director Catholic Education Office, Vila.
- Andre Kalmark –former student, Onesua College, Eton Village.
- James Kalo - Deputy Principal, Onesua Presbyterian College.
- John Kennedy – Head of Social Studies, Onesua College.
- Jack Takalo Graham – Teacher, Onesua Presbyterian High School.
- Rolland Assial – Principal, Lycee LAB (Louis Antoine de Bougainville), Vila
- Sanual Narai – Provincial Education Officer, Shefa Province, Vila.
- Principal – Ecole Secondaire Montmartre, Efate
- Bro. Sakoal Lino - Ecole Secondaire Montmartre, Efate.
- Beverley Sands – Principal, Vila Central Primary School, Vila.
- Physia Torboe – Teacher, Vila Central Primary School
- Nick Duggin - DFID British High Commission, Vila
- Ralph Regenvanu – Director, Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Vila.
- Catriona Hyslop – Linguist, Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Vila
- Rex Horoi – Executive Director, Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific, Vila.
- Grace Molisa – President Vanuatu National Council of Women, Vila
- Ishmael Marikeliu – Secretary General, National Council of Chiefs, Vila
- Peter Walker – Founder, Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vila
- Jo Dorras – Writer, Wan Smolbag Theatre, Vila.

Espiritu Santo Island

- Student focus group – Nakamar, Luganville.
- Iris Simon – Teacher of Social Studies (Years7&8), Santo East JSS.
- Pierre Sewen, Principal, Santo East, JSS.
- Jimmy Solomon – Principal, Hogharbour JSS
- Robert Dyer – First year teacher of Social Studies, Hogharbour JSS.
- Renjio Samuel – Principal, Matevulu College, Espiritu Santo.
- Nancy Garae – Head of Social Studies, Matevulu College, Espiritu Santo.
- Charley Melteras – Principal, College Technique de St Michel, Luganville.

- Tamath Daniel – Provincial Education Officer, Sanma Education Office, Luganville, Santo.
- Annie Shem – Executive Officer, Sanma Education Office, Luganville, Espiito Santo.
- Chief William – Luganville.
- Chief Bakon Pandad – Espiritu Santo.
- Tevanu Anderson – Secretary. to Chiefs, Luganville.
- 23 chiefs from Santo and Malekula.
- Jean-Marie Virelala – Proviseur, College de Luganville, Santo
- Women's Officer – Department of Womens Affairs, Santo Provincial Office.
- President, Luganville Town Council of Women.
- Treasurer, Luganville Town Council of Women.

Tanna Island

- Madelaine Lesines – Provincial Education Officer.
- Jeffrey Reuben – School Advisor, Anglophone.
- Raymond Nasser – School Inspector, Primary.
- Augustine Poule – Social Studies teacher, Lowanatom Junior Secondary (Technical) School.
- Herve Tarilas – Principal, Lowanatom Junior Secondary (Technical) School.
- Steven Iauko – Head Teacher, Lowanatom Primary School & School Advisor, Francophone.
- Jennifer Manua – Principal, Lenakel Junior Secondary School.
- George Melten - Principal, College d'Isangel Junior Secondary School.
- Wanda de Hass and Eliane – SS teachers, College d'Isangel Junior Secondary Schoo
- Jean Bai Sese – Principal, Tafea Junior Secondary School.
- Evelyn Thompson – Deputy Principal, Tafea Junior Secondary School.
- Heather Berry – Technology and English, (AVA) teacher, Tafea Junior Secondary School.
- Danial Koltea – Principal, Dip Point Primary School.
- Meriam Yaviong – Grade 3 teacher, Dip Point Primary School.
- Kuta Fatara – Principal, Ienaula Junior Secondary School.
- Jocabeth Kaukane – Social Studies teacher, Ienaula Junior Secondary School.

Australia

- Joanne O'Mara – Former AVA teacher, Onesua High School, Efate
- Gregor McNish – Former CVA in Vanuatu

Attachment 2 (A) – Non school Stakeholders Interview Schedule

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Concepts of citizenship

- What are your ideas about is a 'good citizen'in your country?
- What do think are some of the influences that determine your ideas about the 'good citizen'?
- How important do you consider the following to be when you think about the 'good citizen'?
  A sense of personal identity
  A sense of community/location
  A sense of the global citizen
  A sense of civil behaviour
  A sense of participation/social action

Reflections on the big picture

When you think about the future of your country/province/village what sort of picture do you have in your mind?

When you think about 'locating yourself' what location do you think of first? Group? Place?

How important is a sense of national identity to you when you think about your future?

Would you consider your country to be multicultural society?

What do you think are some of the blockers that have hindered your notions of what a 'good citizen' is from coming into effect?

What are some of the blockers that have impacted on your ideas about the future of your country/province/village?

What are some of the encouragers that have impacted on your ideas about the future of your country/province/village?

How important is it for you to be involved in the decision-making in some aspects of your life/work? Which aspects? How might you be involved?

To what extent do you think you are given reasonable opportunities to regularly participate in decision-making?

What would be the most important aspect that you feel you do not have opportunities to participate in decision-making?

What are some ways you can think of, that the local community/ national government promotes ideas about the 'good citizen?

While acknowledging the recent tensions how would you describe the extent of 'social tolerance' in your country?

What are the biggest problems preventing peace/social tolerance in your community?

Schools and Social Tolerance and Cohesion and Citizenship

At what age do you think children should begin at school?

What roles, if any, are schools currently teaching young people to be 'good citizens?

What roles should schools be playing in teaching young people about being 'good citizens'?

How would you describe your level of understanding about the curriculum in your local school?

To what extent do you think schools/the current curriculum are providing what you want out of education for young people? What's missing?

Should schools be involved in the teaching of values such as social tolerance, cultural diversity and democracy?

Do you think schools are in fact engaging in the teaching and learning of these values already?

Do you support the idea of a national curriculum and/or do you support locally/provincally developed curriculum? Why? What are the benefits? How would you like to be involved?

Should the local community determine the curriculum/ appoint teachers/ pay for them/ build schools?

How important is it for schools to give opportunities for students to practice participating in decision making?

What is the school system doing for the young people who drop out of school, say after grade 6?

Would you support the introduction of a subject in the school curriculum which had a focus on 'citizenship education'?

If so, what would be the most important things/ideas/topics you would want included in this subject?

Local Action

When/what was the last time you participated in some aspect of your local school activities?

How encouraging is your local school in inviting you to participate in school activities?

How important is the teaching of/in local vernacular languages in your school? If yes, would you be prepared/able to assist in this program?

What skills would/could you offer to teach in your local school?

Do you think the cost of school fees prevents some families from sending their children to school? How might local communities assist their local school to lower school fees?

In this project we will be organising a reflective workshop in mid year. What would you like to tell decision makers to consider in their deliberations on what schools can contribute to social tolerance, community participation and democratic processes?

Attachment 2 (B) – School-based Stakeholders Interview Framework

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

Curriculum documents/policies

Does the school have a complete set of current Ministry curriculum documents?
If not , why not?
To what extent are Ministry curriculum documents/resources available to all teachers?
To what extent are these curriculum documents used as curriculum planners by teachers and schools?
To what extent do students and parents have an understanding of the contents of the curriculum documents?
To what extent do curriculum documents drive/dominate teaching and learning?
To what extent can teachers adapt curriculum documents to suit the locality/their own style?
To what extent do curriculum documents focus on local/island/national/global issues?
Do you support the idea of a national curriculum and/or do you support locally/provincally developed curriculum? Why? What are the benefits? Who should be involved? How would you like to be involved?

School governance

What are the traditional processes/patterns of decision making/leadership in the local community?
How do these processes work? In what ways does the community benefit?
Are modifications to the traditional processes possible, and if so how might they be initiated?
Should these traditional ways of decision making be encouraged/taught in schools?
How would you describe the decision making style of your school?
Who and/or what factors determine the style of leadership/school governance in the school?
To what extent do individuals/collectively teachers contribute to decision making in the school?
In what ways do students contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
In what ways do parents contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
When/what was the last time you participated in some aspect of your local school activities?
What would be the most appropriate style of school governance for your community or school? Why?

Classroom practices

To what extent do examinations drive classroom practices? Is this OK?
Can you name some social issues that have been discussed in your classes?
Why were these particular issues raised in class?
To what extent do teachers encourage/allow for the addressing of social issues in classrooms? If so, how is this done?
Do you think teachers impose their values on the students? When?
What are the blockers that prevent active student engagement in social issues?
To what extent and in what ways do parents and others contribute to classroom practices?
What is the most commonly used teaching and learning pedagogy? Why is this the one? Who decides?
What do understand by the term 'democratic classroom'?
Do you support a democratic classroom?
How do you as a teacher /parent feel about sharing decision making with students?
How important is it for students to be taught and learn in their own local language?
How often does this happen in your school/ classroom? Why this often? Under what conditions?
Is there a punishment/reward regime in this school?
How often have you experienced/witnessed intolerance, culturally insensitive behaviour and verbal/physical abuse in your classroom/school?
How important do you believe modelling in school and family are to young people learning and practising tolerance?

Curriculum content

What are the most important things students should learn in school?
What skills are important?
Who should decide which values are the important ones for young people to learn?
Should school teach values? If yes, what values?
Can schools teach young people to be a 'good citizen'?
How important is it for students to practice how to be a 'good citizen/person at school?
How might this be done?
How important is it for schools to include topics that encourage social tolerance and cohesion in the curriculum? Why?
Do you think schools are in fact engaging in the teaching and learning of these values already?
Is it important that religious education is part of the school curriculum?
Is religious education the appropriate curriculum area to teach about values?
How important is it that the curriculum allows for/encourages the teaching and learning of local issues/skills/ content?
Should students develop a global perspective?
What are the most important aspects of the curriculum? Why?
To what extent do you think schools/the current curriculum are providing what you want out of education for young people? What's missing?
Has the curriculum changed since you were at school? If so, for the better? Why?

The possibilities

What's the best thing that schools are doing at the moment?
What's the thing that they could do a lot better?
In an ideal world what would you most like changed at your school?
What do hope that your school can most offer to all of its young people ?
What can the school system do for the young people who drop out of school, say after grade 6?
What are schools for?
What do you understand by the term 'social tolerance'? What are some of its essential parts?
What goals can you envisage coming true for you and your place?
What is the role of social tolerance in this picture?
While acknowledging the recent tensions how would you describe the extent of 'social tolerance' in your community/country now?
What are the biggest obstacles preventing peace/social tolerance in your community?
When you think about the future of your country/province/village, what sort of picture do you have in your mind?

In this project we will be organising a reflective workshop in mid year. What would you like to tell decision makers to consider in their deliberations on what schools can contribute to social tolerance , community participation and democratic processes?

Attachment 3 Project Summary Handout

WORLD BANK PACIFIC ISLANDS PROJECT

Promoting social tolerance and cohesion through education

Project Description

Education systems can play a crucial role in the process of nation building and consolidation. Furthermore, education may be an effective instrument to promote understanding, respect and dialogue between cultures. Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and fomenting social tolerance are not simple endeavors; they can be, however, areas for educational action.

The primary aim of this project is to develop a general operational framework for the design of a school-based civic education agenda tailored to the specific social and cultural environment of Pacific island nations. In particular, this project will strive to address how educational systems in these multicultural societies may forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are proposed as country case studies, however, the methodology hereby developed could be used and replicated in other country settings. Moreover, the findings and policy recommendations of these case studies can serve as a basis to orient potential policy options for other island nations in the region.

Specific objectives
The project will involve collecting field data at three different locations in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

The following questions will serve as an overarching guide:

Does the educational system give equal chances to people from all ethno-linguistic groups?
Does it bring children together from these groups?
Does it address directly (through the curriculum or other avenues) with the values of respect, tolerance, multicultural understanding, compromise and negotiation?

(a) Stakeholder assessment: The consultant team will be responsible for collecting data from a sample of school principals, teachers, students, parents and community members regarding their opinions towards cultural diversity, ethnic conflict, citizenship and political participation, civic institutions, and democratic processes. The school sample will be drawn to maximize diversity in terms of ethnic, language and religious backgrounds as well as include socioeconomic and rural/urban diversity.

The information collected will serve as a basis to understand prevalent attitudes towards multiculturalism and pluralism.

(b) Operational assessment: Concurrently, the consultant team will perform a review of present school-based practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion. The activities in this sub-component will include an analysis of civic/multicultural values in the prescribed curriculum and textbooks, as well as observable related school activities, classroom behavior and management practices.

Overall, this activity will allow the identification of possible vectors of intervention to promote social understanding and civic participation.

(c) Reflection workshop: The consultant team will also be responsible for organizing, potentially in collaboration with a local agency, a national reflection workshop in order to share some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop will also strive to promote

discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program.

Deliverables

Upon the conclusion of the stakeholder and operational assessments, the consultant team is expected to present two reports:

(a) An analysis of stakeholder views within the educational system on cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes.

(b) An analysis of curricular and other school-based practices regarding cultural diversity, social tolerance and democratic processes.

These reports will have as a target audience local policymakers and educators. The findings and recommendations from these two reports will serve as a basis for the reflection workshop discussions, which in turn will result in the production of a third deliverable:

(c) A framework for the development of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" agenda, specifically tailored to Pacific island conditions, that promotes national cohesion and democratic participation, while respecting cultural diversity and social tolerance. This framework should strive to provide a foundation for policymakers to review and address the role of schooling in promoting social cohesion, as well as some basic instruments for teachers to include values education in their daily practices.

Research Team

Warren Prior : (Project Manager) Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – warrenp@deakin.edu.au

Suzanne Mellor : Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email – mellor@acer.edu.au

Graeme Withers : Senior Research Fellow, Australian Council for Educational Research, Melbourne, Australia.
Email - withers@acer.edu.au

Attachment 4: Reflective Workshop Handout

Pacific Islands Project

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

Workshop Handout

Project Brief: Strengthening democratic processes, encouraging political dialogue, building civic institutions, overcoming prejudice, combating stereotypes and fomenting social tolerance can be areas for educational action.

Chief Project Goal: In particular, this project will strive to address how educational systems in multicultural societies may forge national identities, while promoting social tolerance and understanding, supporting community participation and strengthening democratic processes.

Specific Research Questions:

- Does the educational system give equal chances to people from all ethno-linguistic groups?
- Does it bring children together from these groups?
- Does it address directly (through the curriculum or other avenues) with the values of respect, tolerance, multicultural understanding, compromise and negotiation?

Reflective Workshop Goals: The consultant team will also be responsible for organizing a national reflective workshop in order to (1) share some preliminary findings of the project. This workshop will also strive to (2) promote discussion among local stakeholders of potential vectors for the development and implementation of a school-based "education for mutual understanding" program.

Workshop Session 1: Values and Assumptions Underlying Schooling

- Symbols used for Identity in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu
- Introduction to idea of mind mapping as a means of conceptualising curriculum
- Education as socially constructed: values and assumptions;
- Need for development of National Goals of Education as framework for curriculum and policy.

Workshop Session 2: Connections to the World Bank Social Tolerance Project

- Progress of the Project
- What are the attributes/characteristics of ***the good citizen*** ?
- The Six Dimensions of Citizenship:

Civic Knowledge (*eg: Understanding of cultural contexts in which a community exists*)
A Sense of Personal Identity (*eg: A positive attitude to self*)
A Sense of Community (*eg: A commitment to family, village of nation*)
Adoption of a code of Civil Behaviours (*eg: A respect for others*)
An informed and empathetic response to social issues (*eg: Caring for the environment*)
A disposition to take social action (*eg: Engaging in community service*)

- Key Questions when Considering the Development of a Set of National Goals of Education

1: What sort of world do you see children entering schools in 2001 will encounter in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu in their lifetime?
2: What will young people in the early 21st century need to be able to do, to know and value in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu?
3: What will schools in Solomon Islands/Vanuatu need to be like in order to effectively cater for these visions?
4: Can these 3 visions be summarised into an agreed and common national goals for the 21st century ?

Workshop Session 3: Small groups to discuss the following Big Issue, based on previous Questions
- Establishing priorities for National Goals of Schooling for Solomon Islands/Vanuatu

Workshop Session 4: Draft Proposals for National Goals of Schooling for Solomon Islands/Vanuatu
- Brief reporting by groups of discussions /conclusions regarding the Big Issue
- Closure & overview
- Presentation of Certificates and Gifts

Attachment 5: Participants at Reflective Workshops

Solomon Islands Reflective Workshop

Participants by job-type

Principals: 2 (from Guadalcanal Province)
Catholic Education Authority: 1(Education Secretary)
Classroom teachers: 5 (Guadalcanal Province schools)
Ministry of Education bureaucrats: 4 (Under Secretary, and 3 Senior Education Officers)
Colleger of Higher Education: 1 (Head of School)
Community Groups: 1 (Interested person)
Non Government Organisations: 2 (Director, and secretary, Don Bosco Vocational Training Organisation)
Other Government Departments: 2 (Head of Women's Development, General Secretary National Council of Women)
Total: 18

Vanuatu Reflective Workshop

Participants by job-type

Principals: 5 (from 3 islands/provinces)
Provincial Education Officers: 1
Classroom teachers: 3 (Malapoa & International School)
Curriculum DevelopmentUnit: 3 (Executive Officer, Editor & Co-ordinator)
Ministry of Education bureaucrats: 7 (3 Directors, and 4 Senior Education Officers)
Teachers College: 2 (Principal and staff member)
Non Governmnet Organisations: 1 (Executive Director, Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International)
Total: 24

Attachment 6 (A): Workshop National Goals

Pacific Islands Project

World Bank – Deakin University – Australian Council for Educational Research

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education

National Goals of Education for Vanuatu for the C21st

At the reflective workshop on Friday 22 June, in Port Vila, three groups of participants developed the following sets of national goals. The goals have been prioritised by the groups. The data has been taken from the groups' workshop report sheets.

Group 1

1. Each school should have policy and guidelines to address the goals.
2. Review and rewrite the curriculum to include civic knowledge outcomes.
3. To train the teachers to be innovative in implementing the revised curriculum, through pre-service and in-service training courses.
4. To formally include the community in curriculum development and evaluation.
5. To equip all students with competencies to enable them to contribute to their societies after formal education.
6. To encourage school administration to use extra-curricular activities to achieve legitimate learning outcomes.
7. To conduct a dual evaluation of teachers and students' learning outcomes.

Group 2

Equality of Access -
- buildings and facilities
- opportunities right across society

Education Equity -
- formal / informal
- gender
- skill
- resources / buildings

Quality Education -
- relevance to our society
- trained teachers
- relevant to present / future changes

Community Participation -
- literate society

Environmentally / Culturally sensitive -
- natural resources
- cultural activities
- aesthetic values
- sustainability

A Holistic Ni-Vanuatu -
- Spiritually
- Culturally
- Physically
- Mentally / knowledge
- Participative

Group 3

1. To provide Universal Basic Education to all Ni-Vanuatu children regardless of
- Gender
- Religion
- Language
- Location
- Ability

2. Provide and improve relevant curriculum which enhances
- Cultural
- Spiritual
- Economic
- Social development needs of Vanuatu

3. Delivery of quality education across the whole system.

4. To maintain, protect and preserve different languages and cultures as part of our national heritage and to promote bi-lingualism / multi-lingualism.

5. To provide and encourage an equitable system of education.

6. To encourage partnership in education so as to maintain sustainability for the expansion of the education system.

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor

22 June 2001

Attachment 6 (B): National Goals for Vanuatu

National Goals of Education for Vanuatu in the Twenty-first Century

*(**Warren Prior** developed these national goals for discussions purposes by collating the goals developed during the workshop. They do not represent the views of any other person or organization.)*

The purpose of schooling is to assist young people to develop knowledge, skills and values which will enable them to contribute to the community as informed, active, participatory and socially responsible citizens.

Goal 1: Education is a community responsibility and policy and practices need to be determined by the community. Schools need to be places where relevant, flexible, socially just and effective programs are developed and delivered in order to assist young people to move along the pathway to becoming contributing members of their communities.

Vanuatu is a newly created democratic nation in which he forces of old, namely, the impact of colonialism and the traditions and customs of its peoples, are now being confronted to determine the shape of its future. However Vanuatu is not able to confront these forces without considering an even newer force, that of globalisation.

Goal 2 : Education policies and practices will need to clearly enhance young peoples' understandings of their cultural heritage, the impact of colonialism and their role in shaping the future of Vanuatu in a global setting.

Goal 3 : Young people will need to develop knowledge, skills and values about their understandings of these forces and will need to be critically active in participating as future citizens of Vanuatu. In particular, schools will need to encourage skills in analysis and problem solving.

Goal 4 : In the support of a democratic community, schools will need to encourage students to be active citizens both within and outside the immediate school community. In particular, schools will need to be democratic institutions, and students will need to have opportunities for developing decision making skills, developing skills and values of self-confidence, self esteem, and commitment to personal and collective excellence.

One feature of globalisation is that successful nations of the future will be those nations who accept, but shape, the opportunities that globalization brings to both schooling and nations as a whole.

Goal 5 : Education systems will need to invest in the enhancement of technological understandings, skills and values of both the bureaucracy and school practices. The ability to critically analyse the social impact of technologies and to preserve its balance within the maintainance of traditional customs will be essential.

Goal 6 : Schooling should develop students' abilities to critically analyse the media of globalisation. In particular, schools will need to develop courses in media analysis.

Vanuatu, as a nation of many islands, has a unique and diverse cultural heritage which will continue to face pressures from within, but also brought on it by even greater pressures from outside.

Goal 7: The school system will need to provide opportunities for young people to enhance their intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, moral and aesthetic development in supporting the preservation of Vanuatu's traditional customs. In particular, schools will need to develop courses in the creative arts, physical well-being and civic traditions.

Goal 8: In recognising and valuing cultural diversity, a national language policy for schools will need to be developed. This will need to done with wide community consultation. In particular, outcomes of this policy will include the production of appropriate teaching and learning resources, the appropriate training of teachers and the valuing of bi-lingual/multi-lingual practices.

Goal 9: Diversity of cultures brings with it opportunities to create diverse schooling structures. Building on the traditional values of respect and social justice, schooling must provide equal access and equal opportunities for success for all young people, regardless of gender, location, ability, age, religion or language. In particular, education must provide safe, supportive learning environments for all young people from age 5 to age 14, within a number of school structures, including vocational schools, community schools, non-boarding secondary schools.

Goal 10: Education systems, while celebrating cultural diversity and the possibility of a number of cultural identities, will recognize and promote a socially cohesive framework of shared values.

Goal 11: The impact of the nation of islands will be recognized in the equitable distribution of resources and facilities across the nation. It may be necessary at times to adopt a positive discrimination policy to redress past inequities. Schools will also need to have some discretion and flexibility in developing their individual school goals to suit their local communities, but within the broad national framework.

Vanuatu, in the foreseeable future, will continue to be reliant on some forms of aid from external sources. Accountability and demonstrated effectiveness will continue to be key criteria for future donor support.

Goal 12: All stakeholders in the education community need to be held responsible and accountable for their policies and practices. For students, this means that they will need to be encouraged to value learning and to be supportive of life long learning. For schools teachers and principals, they will need to be both fairly paid as public servants in recognition of their critical role and to be also regularly assessed for the effectiveness of their performance. Administrators at all levels will likewise need to be accountable for, and transparent in, their policies and practices. Mechanisms will need to be established to formalise these processes.

Goal 13: The current examination system is socially divisive, ineffective as a measure of the goals of schooling and the future learning performance of students, and is open to inappropriate influences. The Grade 6 examination will be abolished within 3 years, allowing all students to continue schooling in some appropriate form until at least year 8. Testing for literacy will be introduced at the completion of Grade 6 but only as a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning **of literacy and for providing data for future remedial action if necessary.** A new examination will be developed for Year 8 to directly assess the national goals of education.

Goal 14: In order to assist the majority of young people who will, in the foreseeable future, return to their village communities after completing year 8, a set of generic key competencies will be developed for use in schools, particularly in years 7 and 8. These competencies will assist students in the transition back to their communities and will also be important for those students who will continue in formal education. These competencies underpin the new year 8 examination.

(WP – 25 June 2001)

Anderson, B., (1991) *Imagined Communities,* Verso, London.

Australian Council for Overseas Aid, (2000) *Manmade Disaster in the Solomon Islands,* Report, ACFOA, Canberra.

Cogan, J.,& Morris, P., (2000) "The Development of Civic Values in Pacific Rim Societies",
unpublished paper presented at *Emerging Democracies, Citizenship and Human Rights Education* conference, The Netherlands, June 2000.

Gilbert, R., (Ed.) (1996) *Studying Society and Environment,* Melbourne, Jacaranda.

Hannam, D., (1999) "Schools for Democracy : From Rhetoric to Reality", in journal, *Connect*
No. 118, August, Melbourne. (Contact: r.holdsworth@edfac.unimelb.edu.au)

Ichilov, O., (1990) *Political Socialization, Citizenship Education & Democracy,* New York,
Teachers College Press.

International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (2000) *Civic Education Across Countries Twenty Four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project,* Executive Summary.

Kennedy, K., (1998) "Preparing Teachers for the New Civics Education", in *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education & Development,* Vol. 1, No. 2.

Knight, T, & Pearl, A.,(1999) *The Democratic Classroom: Theory to Informed Practice,* Hampton Press, NJ, USA.

Lepani, B., (1996) "Education in the Information Age", in Kennedy, K., (Ed.) *New Challenges for Citizenship Education,* ACSA, Canberra.

Mellor, S., (1997) *What's the Point? Political Attitudes of Victorian Year 11 Students,* Research Monograph No. 53, Melbourne, ACER Press.

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (2000), *Education 2000 : The Annual Report,* Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Prior, W., (1999) "Teachers, Students and their Parents talk about what it means to be a 'Good Citizen' in Australia", in *Theory & Research in Social Education,* NCSS, Spring, Vol. 27, No 2, USA.

Tedesco, J.C.,(1997) "Education for What Citizenship?" in *Educational Innovation,* No. 90,
March 1997, Geneva, International Bureau of Education.

Turner, B., (1997) "Citizenship Studies: A General Theory", in *Citizenship Studies,* Vol.1, No.1, February, Carfax.

Turney-Purta, J., & Schwille, J., (1998) "Civics Values Learned in School: Policy and Practice in Industrialised Nations", in *Comparative Education Review,* Vol. 30, No 1.

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS PROJECT

PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

Report 2: Operational Assessment

Suzanne Mellor
Warren Prior
Graeme Withers

September 2001

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

and

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

This report and the recommendations within it represent the advice and opinions of the consultants. They do not necessarily represent the views of government officials in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu or of officers of the World Bank.

Contents

SECTION 1: PROCESS OF CURRICULUM AND OPERATIONS REVIEW

Purpose of this Report

The focus of this report is a review of

> *present school-based practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion. The activities in this sub-component will include an analysis of civic/multicultural values in the prescribed curriculum and textbooks, as well as observable related school activities, classroom behaviour and management practices.*
> *(World Bank Terms of Reference : Pacific Islands Project)*

The research team considered this focus as an opportunity to document the juxtaposition between the rhetoric of educational policy documents, the expression of those policies in curriculum documents and the reality of actions and practices taking place in schools and classrooms in the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu. This report complements and augments *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, for which the fieldwork was undertaken simultaneously. Both this report and Report 1 will inform the development of a policy framework to enhance social tolerance in the South Pacific region, which is the focus of Report 3.

Overview of the Operational Fieldwork in both Countries

A detailed description of the Research Methodology used in this project was provided in Section 4 of Report 1: Stakeholder Assessment. The review of the operational elements of both systems took three approaches to data collection and it was undertaken using a common set of data sources:

Documentary review and summary:

- Ministry of Education published policies and reports;
- Syllabuses and other curriculum documents;
- School policy documents
- Teacher guides
- Student resource documents
- Student writings.

In the Solomon Islands, curriculum documents were collected from several Ministry of Education sources, from the Curriculum Development Centre, and from various other organisations and NGOs operating in the country. In Vanuatu, curriculum documents were likewise collected from several Ministry of Education sources, from the Curriculum Development Centre, the Vanuatu Teachers' College, and from various other organisations and NGOs operating in the country.

In both countries difficulties were experienced, for a number of reasons, in obtaining a complete set of curriculum documents and current policy documents. In some cases no school or organisation had a copy of a particular curriculum document. On other occasions, and for whatever reasons, some policy documents were not made available to the research team. This section of the report therefore is based on an incomplete set of documents.

In the sections of this report dealing with the Solomon Islands, use has been made of the texts written by students for the newspaper essay competition held in March 2001.

Interviews with practitioners [principals; inspectors; teachers] and students

In both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu a range of schools were visited by the research team. The selected schools represented diversity in terms of location, sector, affiliation and focus. For a list of the schools visited see the country-specific 'contextual issues' section of the report.

For the second round of fieldwork in the Solomon Islands, visits to a range of primary and secondary schools of various types in three provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita and Western Province) were arranged by officials of the Ministry of Education and Training. In the event, not all the schools recommended could be visited for various logistical reasons, and other schools were substituted after consultation with provincial education offices.

For the second round of fieldwork in Vanuatu, visits to a range of primary and secondary schools of various types, in three provinces (Efate, Espiritu Santo and Tanna), were arranged by officials of the Ministry of Education. In all three locations the research team was able to visit an additional number of schools, which broadened the sample of schools still further. For a list of the schools visited see the country-specific 'contextual issues' section of the report.

On most school visits in both countries, the researcher was accompanied by an official of the Ministry of Education. When this occurred, it was designed to facilitate the visit, as some schools were unaware both of the timing of the visit and the nature of the project. The research team believes that the attendance by the Ministry of Education officials did not interfere with the responses provided by the school practitioners.

Interviews were obtained with as many such people as time and school schedules permitted. Conditions varied: in some schools, general meetings of quite large numbers of staff could be convened for our visit. Sometimes, however, we only interviewed the principal and maybe one or two other teachers. The most common pattern was to interview the principal and teacher(s) of Social Studies, on the grounds that this learning area was the one most likely to address issues of social tolerance. Most interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participant(s); no requests for such a procedure were refused. During other interviews, notes were taken.

On all occasions, the discussions with practitioners were open, frank and free of any suggestion of influence by Ministry of Education officials. In fact, the practitioners appreciated the opportunity to discuss substantive issues which the project raised.

Observations of actual practice

Wherever it was possible, the researchers were welcomed by teachers into their classrooms when lessons were in progress. However, opportunities for this activity varied according to the site. In some cases the researchers were invited to participate in, or to lead classroom activities. In some cases the students were not present at the school on the day of the visit, due to a lack of power or water or the absence of a teacher.

The complexity of this operational review process is indicated by the common school-based interview schedules (See Attachment 1) and the following questions: Were we:

- looking for whatever vestiges of moral precepts might exist in a specific formal syllabus (or across the whole curricular offering)?

- looking to see how much weight the moral curriculum has/should have/might have within a student's total school experience?
- analysing specific subjects, for example, Social Science; Religious Education; Agriculture, for evidence of current social learnings or for trends or important changes over time?
- looking for some sort of balance between national and personal 'interests' in the educational materials available to its teachers?
- specifically looking for evidence of a whole range of moral, personal, social, familial, community and national 'values'?
- looking for evidence of a chance during the whole school experience of a child for internalisation of values or precepts?

Inevitably, given a brief as wide as this, the project was, to some extent, doing all these things.

Conceptualising the educational process

The educational process, and specifically the curriculum, is both a personal and social construct. Curriculum therefore has different meanings attached to it (Brady & Kennedy, 1999). For stakeholders within the education sector it is tempting to consider curriculum as some sort of private arrangement between teacher and student. On one level in the classroom it probably can be described as this sort of private contractual arrangement. However the nature of curriculum is much broader than a classroom context. It is a part of the social, political and economic structures of society. In seeking to understand the school curriculum the task is also to understand the complex forces and patterns that characterise the operation of society. The educational process and curriculum therefore are fully embedded in the goals, aspirations and values of society.

In *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, stakeholders defined the education process and curriculum from a wide range of perspectives. Stakeholders in the business community saw the role of schools as delivering outcomes that have relevance to employment opportunities and needs. The view of education of those parents who had had a formal education was shaped by their own experiences as students. They saw the operation of schools as a vehicle linked to a set of values – respect for traditions and cultures for example, and not merely as some form of academic abstraction. Students had a very wide range of views about the nature of their school experience. Writing for the *Solomon Star* newspaper essay writing competition, many students saw schooling as a means for regenerating social harmony. Other students, in both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, saw schooling as largely meaningless; unconnected to their lives.

School operations, as expressed through the curriculum, is essentially about the future. Education policy makers come from the dominant hegemonic group, carrying a baggage of values and assumptions about society. Curriculum is therefore contestable and represents the values of a dominant group at a particular time. This places curriculum under continuous stress from groups in the community with different curriculum orientations.

The educational process comprises many different pieces, centred on three key areas: *curriculum*, (what's worth knowing), the *pedagogy* (which enacts it), and the *assessment* (the results of this pedagogy expressed in outcomes of student learning). Around these keys can be placed other areas of student experience, both in formal and non-formal settings, which can be expected to influence the three central ones, and without which any picture of the student learning process is incomplete. These outlier areas include learning done 'elsewhere', during experiences of the *extra-curriculum* (these experiences might include, for example, gardening work done by students after school hours).

What's worth knowing in the education process may not always be explicit. The *hidden curriculum* describes those student experiences which are not explicitly stated in policy documents or are not formally enacted in school operations. Examples of experiences arising from the hidden curriculum are often in the area of social learning. This is therefore of particular interest for this project as values like social tolerance, respect and love are learned outside of the formal curriculum and the learning of such values may take place, for example, during play in the school ground.

The positioning of educational goals, such as the promotion of social tolerance and good citizenship, in operations of schools cuts across the formal and informal line. It may appear in curriculum documents, and to this extent the research team was able to analyse both the nature of the social learning and evaluate the values and assumptions underpinning it. In this study the opportunities given to the research team to observe informal student social learning was often limited by the formalities of the visits to schools. The common school-based interview schedule developed by the research team primarily explored aspects of this informal social learning and the hidden curriculum. The views reported in the Analysis of School Operations (see Sections 4 and 7 in this report) were expressed during interviews with principals and teachers and therefore came from their perspective, rather than from direct observation by researchers.

Many stakeholders in schools we interviewed were at pains to point out that school experience and syllabuses for mainstream primary and secondary students do not give a full educational picture in the area of social learning. They argued that principled values, attitudes and behaviours are first inculcated in the home, the village and the wider community (and to some extent directly by the churches). This development continues once the child goes to school, and is ideally joined by reinforcement and additional opportunities during schooling. It is at school that the randomness of social learning is replaced by the formality of a (hopefully) sequenced curriculum.

Curriculum is often defined as those learning experiences which are embedded in some structured set of systematic experiences, usually in the context of a school. In deciding what is worth knowing, communities are usually not just talking about the acquisition of knowledge. The development of skills, for example psycho-motor skills or social skills, and the social development of children in terms of attitudes and values are also part of the broad goals of education. The existence of differences between curricula is often demonstrated by the different emphases given to these three areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and values. This is not to say that the three areas are mutually exclusive. For example, it is not possible for a person to develop ethical attitudes without an understanding of the basis of ethical options.

Curriculum is also often described as a way of knowing. In the context of this project, where a significant proportion of the focus is on values learning, some understanding of the processes of learning in general, and valuing in particular, is important if the dissemination of curriculum documents and school operations are to be effective in enhancing social learning. This is not the place for a detailed examination of research into the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. However, the research of Howard Gardner (Gardner, 1983), we believe, is of critical importance in framing curriculum in such away as to utilize the concept of multiple intelligences, regardless of cultural contexts.

Gardner argues that curriculum should be constructed in such away as to allow students opportunities to experience multiple usage of childrens' intelligences, including linguistic, musical, logical-mathematics, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, personal and social dimensions. In the global context of support for an outcomes-based model of curriculum in which outcomes are largely directed at enhancing the economic goals of a nation, linguistic and logical-mathematical are emphasised. As a result the more non-measurable and personal aspects of intelligence, for example, the social ability to understand the motives, feelings, and behaviours of other people,

are down-played as being of lesser importance. This is one of the practical challenges for this project, in that any support for curriculum renewal in the area of social learning will need to recognise the implications of Gardner's research.

Values in the Curriculum

The effectiveness of the enhancement of social learning in curriculum and in school operations, in the case of this project in the area of social tolerance, will also need to recognise the findings of research into the acquisition of values. Dewey (Dewey, 1966) described valuing as

> *Primarily to prize. to esteem, but secondarily it means to apprise, to estimate. It means, that is, the act of cherishing something, holding it dear, and also the act of passing judgement upon the nature and amount of its value as compared to something else.*

Five successive stages of development in the acquisition of attitudes and values can be identified:

1. Identifying and prizing one's beliefs and behaviours
2. Choosing one's beliefs from alternatives and in consideration of consequences
3. Exposure, attainment of basic knowledge and initial engagement;
4. Opportunities for experience, acting on and development of deeper understanding and a wide range of relevant skills;
5. The appearance of internalised, consistent and repeated attitudes and behaviours.

An example of the application of this schema, using 'respect for others' as a key attribute might be as follows. The application in this example combines aspects of the process, so that there are three stages... but each aspect of the schema is present.

The first stage (identifying and exposure) manifests itself as opportunities offered for learning to play, then learn, with others;

The next stage (experience and practice) involves the development of skills and opportunities to practise teaching one's juniors;

The third stage (internalised and acting on) might include for example, volunteer community work.

The most cited purposes or goals for including values education in the curriculum and school and classroom practices are to address the following needs:

- To develop a set of values that can be used to help young people to think reflectively in order to fulfil their responsibilities as members of their community and as citizens.
- To assist young people to develop analytical skills that can be applied to events and issues.
- To promote the development of worthy personal values.
- To clarify and explain the role of values in human affairs from the past and present.
- To teach a systematic means to identify and clarify the practices and habits that exist in differing cultures.

Both affective and intellectual capacities and competencies are required by students engaging in learning about values and controversial issues. These capacities can be encouraged and enhanced

in schools, both from the perspective of the formal curriculum and in the daily practices of schools and teachers.

The prime focus in this review of school operations was to collect data of what happens, or what the nation says ought to happen, to promote the positive social development of young people. The assumption underlying this precept is that there is a common understanding, shared by politicians, administrators, social and community leaders, teachers and parents, of what constitutes 'positive social development' of a nation's youth. If countries have a set of stated specific 'Goals of Schooling', such matters would certainly be part of what such a document reveals about what the nation intends for its junior (and later senior/adult) citizens. The absence of such a charter means that, for example, any 'intention' to inculcate spiritual, moral or behavioural values can get buried in the detail of the ordinances: syllabuses, teachers' guides and the like. Sometimes overarching aims or objectives for teaching a given unit or sequence of instruction, or for a program generally, are stated in a curriculum document. But even then it is often hard to find out how such aims will or might come to life in classroom or playground.

Conceptual framework used to analyse curriculum and school based practices

As reported in Report 1, the Stakeholders report for this project, we have found Prior's (1999) model of citizenship in the context of a democratic society as the most useful framework for both coding the views of stakeholders about the role of schools in promoting social tolerance, and in deconstructing the discourse in curriculum documents. This model is also useful in that it encompasses and gives a cohesive view of the various characteristics of a 'good citizen', as outlined in the Terms of Reference for this project. For example, promoting respect and dialogue between cultures, strengthening democratic processes, promoting social tolerance and supporting community participation.

Prior's six dimensions of citizenship are:

Dimension 1: Civic knowledge – for example, understandings about political organizations, decision making processes, institutions, legal requirements.

Dimension 2: A sense of personal identity – for example, a feeling of self-worth, belonging efficacy, resilience.

Dimension 3: A sense of community – for example, locating oneself within a community(s), some perhaps imagined communities.

Dimension 4: Adoption of a code of civil behaviours – for example, civil and ethical behaviour, concern for the welfare of others.

Dimension 5: An informed and empathetic response to social issues – for example, environmental issues, social justice, equality and equity.

Dimension 6: A skilled disposition to take social action – for example, community service, active participation in community affairs.

SECTION 2: CONTEXTUAL ISSUES TO AN OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICES: SOLOMON ISLANDS

Schools Visited

Malaita province:	Auki Primary School	urban
	Auki Community High School	urban
	Aligegeo National Secondary School*	semi-urban
	Faiako Primary School	rural
	Gwaunaroa Community High School	rural
Guadalcanal province:	Nguvia Community High School	rural
	Nguvia Primary School	rural
	St Josephs' School* Tenaru [Nat. Sec. School]	rural
	King George VI National Secondary School*	urban
	Bishop Epalle Secondary School	urban
Western province:	Gizo Community High School	urban
	Goldie College, Munda*	island
	Dunde Community High School, Munda rural	rural
	Goldie Community High School, Munda rural	rural

* Boarding schools
The opportunity was taken to interview staff members from **Ruavatu Primary School** during a visit they made to Honiara, since the school site, though chosen by the Ministry, proved to be inaccessible.

General Comments on the Solomon Islands' Education System

Writing an overview of the education system in the Solomon Islands is a challenging task because the available data were very limited or unavailable to the research team. In particular, there does not appear to be a collection of annual reports, nor statements of national educational goals. Recent redundancies and other changes in staffing within the Ministry of Education, and ongoing political unrest have resulted in an understaffed administration which largely appeared to be concentrating on the pragmatics of keeping the system going. As a result, school practitioners, in discussions with the research team, commented on how disenchanted they were with the lack of support offered by the central administration.

The review of curriculum documents and policy statements and the observations of school operations in the Solomon Islands needs to be seen in the broader context of a country which has, in mid 2001, declared itself bankrupt. The economic situation in mid 2001 does not allow for any self funded curriculum review nor for significant improvements in teaching and learning facilities in schools.

Most of the curriculum documents examined for this project were written in the 1980s or earlier by writers from outside of the Solomon Islands. Any recent revisions in curriculum have been small scale and spasmodic and usually initiated by outside donor financial support. There are currently so few staff at the Curriculum Development Centre that they are largely unable to even distribute to schools what limited teaching and learning materials they do have.

Early in the last decade, it was common practice for the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) to mount panel reviews (by practising teachers) of curriculum documents as they were being prepared. However the numbers of practitioners involved were few, the choice of who attended was reported as arbitrary, and the clientele for such occasions would have seem to have been predominantly teachers from Guadalcanal province.

At the time of the field work for this report, the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) had been unable to commence the academic year as there were insufficient funds to repair the students' accommodation buildings and to print teaching materials.

The impact of the lack of funding for education was felt in the three locations visited by the research team. Provincial Education Offices were severely under-resourced and could only offer very limited support of any kind to schools and teachers. There was strong resentment out in the provinces with a practitioner perception that, on the one hand, the central administration in Honiara demanded a centralised curriculum model, but on the other hand appeared to do little to support the implementation of the curriculum in the provinces. Teachers regularly complained of their inability to obtain basic curriculum documents and materials from the administration in Honiara.

Any understanding of the education system in the Solomon Islands needs to consider the impact of the examination system. Although specific information about the examinations was difficult to access, it was obvious from the comments made by stakeholders as described in Report 1, that the examinations served at least two functions. Firstly, the examinations were largely a test of numeracy, and especially, literacy skills and largely ignored other aspects of learning, including social learning. The examinations dominate the curriculum and teaching and learning pedagogies. Secondly, the examinations acted as a deliberate culling process to exclude unsuccessful students from continuing at school.

Subsequent to the exam results being published a large number of students are excluded at the conclusion of primary level (after grade 6). These students had had little opportunity to learn any relevant vocational skills nor to obtain other understandings, skills and values to equip them to contribute to their communities. A final often-heard observation about the examinations was that the results for some students were 'massaged' at the political level in order to secure a place in a desirable secondary school. All of these practices, or perceptions of practices, resulted in social disharmony by creating a sense of distrust in the policy makers in education. It also contributes to significant youth unemployment and disillusion. No social cohesion is being demonstrated by these practices.

A final general comment about the education system in the Solomon Islands is that the impact of 'created' nation is everywhere felt in the discussions about the appropriate language of instruction to be used in schools. The tensions created by geographic and distance issues, the desire by communities to preserve vernacular languages and the tradition of maintaining boarding secondary schools have all contributed to social disharmony. The recent violent conflict is the most recent manifestation of tension and a growing sense of mistrust in the country.

Contextual Comments to Curriculum Analysis: Solomon Islands

Teacher training and professional development

The Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) is the major provider of teachers in the Solomon Islands. Discussions with the Head of the Education Faculty highlighted a number of issues which affect the use by beginning teachers of pedagogies which would enhance social learning. Student teachers came from within an education system which was predicated on an assessment system which undervalued social learning. This Head believed these student teachers had experienced neither co-operative learning styles nor inquiry learning approaches, during their own schooling.

Research about the teaching practices of beginning teachers indicates that they are more likely to continue the pedagogies that they were exposed to at school rather than experiment with new strategies initiated at teachers' college. Other factors like large class sizes, the lack of teaching and learning resources, the absence of curriculum advisors and the continuing impact of the examination system, all contribute to a situation which maintains the status quo.

Beginning teachers are at the whim of the Ministry of Education for their placement in schools. No account appears to be taken of the cultural background of the beginning teacher, so they are often placed in schools far from their village. In this situation they have few local cultural resources and little understanding of local cultural practices. This practice is unlikely to enhance social harmony and is a wasted opportunity for the beginning teacher to make a contribution to their local community, where it might be assumed they could assume leadership positions.

Beginning teachers reported that they left SICHE with an incomplete set of curriculum materials only to then discover that, in some schools, there was also a lack of these materials. The beginning teachers met during this project in the Solomon Islands were full of enthusiasm for teaching but were mostly ill-prepared to cope with opportunities for showing initiative in incorporating social learning into their classroom practices.

Opinion varies as to whether there are untrained teachers actually practising in Solomon Islands' schools. Notices on school noticeboards proclaiming special arrangement for the pay of such people suggests there are some, but the number and distribution of them is unknown.

If some large program were to be mounted to enhance learning about issues concerning citizenship and values education there would of course be a corresponding need to sensitise teachers to such issues, and to offer models for school and classroom behaviours and pedagogical practice. The most commonly used format for such exercises in the Pacific is some variant of the 'cascade' or train-the-trainer approach, but overall the impression is that some more definite and in-depth strategy might need to be used in the case of the Solomon Islands teaching force.

Several teachers put out a call for national and provincial workshops on an on-going basis. Others made the point that principals have no management training. Generally the feeling was:

> *Teachers do not lack skills but they lack reinforcement and learning support.*
> *(Malaitan primary school principal)*

The most common complaint from teachers was that, professionally, they felt totally stranded when it came to in-service education and other forms of professional development. One teacher with a career length of 20 years pointedly complained that she had never received any training beyond her initial certification courses:

> *There is a total lack of extension PD in basic areas – it is long overdue. Some like me graduated 20 years ago and there's been no upgrading since then. We need refresher courses, locally or even overseas.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

Teacher morale

This is a considerable issue for the Solomon Islands teaching force, and it impinges on much of this project also. Most common, amongst primary teachers, was the suggestion that personal confidence and expertise across all subjects was often insufficient, particularly for dealing with the 'Our Community' and 'Our Environment' syllabuses. Subject specialisation may be needed in primary as well as secondary schools.

> *Any other subject like citizenship that was added on, it would be too much for us. We are overloaded, unlike subject specialists in secondary school who concentrate on one. One cannot be good at everything and materials are scarce, so subject teaching in primary schools should be allowed.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

Morale would be hard for one English teacher to sustain: in her junior secondary school, she was the only such specialist, and taught the whole school, for 32 of the 35 available periods. The school was lucky to get her – she had moved from Honiara because of the Tension. The principal

further complained about a serious shortage of English specialist graduates from Solomon Islands College of Higher Education.

Payment of teachers is an issue, in relation to methods of payment, and whether pay is maintained. Many teachers have to take days away from their schools in order to place their cheques in town bank branches, since local bank offices will not accept the cheques, and teachers have to be able to pay their bills. In May many teachers had not been paid for weeks, and some newcomers to the service had not been paid since the commencement of the school year. In Malaita and Guadalcanal, there were threats of a teachers' strike and the Prime Minister had gone to world finance agencies avowing the country was indeed bankrupt. Such financial insecurity and the need to take time away from classes undermines professional confidence and morale.

In this context of salary and career uncertainty, teachers are unlikely to seriously consider the extra work load required in introducing new elements of curriculum into their daily routines. Curriculum renewal rests heavily on classroom practitioners. Teachers in the Solomon Islands are unlikely, as a group, to take a positive view of introducing social issues like social justice and democratic participation in decision making, if at the same time they are daily facing what they see as the impact of the absence of these same civic virtues.

Teacher readiness for cultural and social curriculum

Rarely was there any observed evidence of pedagogical practice having moved beyond a fairly standard top-down, board-and-talk process: the lecture pedagogy.

> *We have straight blackboard teaching – we never take them outside except for sport. The way of teaching must change, involve more action and more group work, but teachers feel untrained even when they are* ***trained.***
> *(Malaitan primary school principal)*

Research about the management of change in educational organisations is predicated on the notion of 'teacher readiness'. This works at a personal level in which teachers personally feel a need to change their practices because they have reflected and identified an aspect of their teaching performance which they want to improve. They also feel that by initiating and embracing some form of change, they, and the change, will be valued. Some were quite prepared to adopt such an approach, if conditions were right.

> *The curriculum is not too crowded: we could do it if we had the resources, and the right sort of resources. As it is, teachers have to work too hard to extract relevant information from very sophisticated materials.*
> *(Malaitan secondary agriculture teacher)*

Teachers too carry around with them the broader cultural baggage of their personal experiences. They will need to value the inclusion of more social learning in the curriculum as an element of broader community aspirations. The long established teaching and learning classroom practices of lecturing and 'chalk and talk', so apparent during visits to schools is another area which requires a huge cultural change of teachers. The 'readiness' to embrace a more 'democratic classroom' pedagogy will inevitably confront the expectations of teacher colleagues, students and administrators about traditional classroom practices.

The examination system

As was commented in *Report 1:Stakeholders Assessment,* the provision of formal education systems is a very costly item in national budgets, and in the context of global economic uncertainties the desire to get value for money is strong. Currently there is a world wide interest in ways and means of measuring school effectiveness both in terms of student learning and in terms of general cost-effectiveness. Countries have adopted a range of evaluation mechanisms

including school reviews, the use of inspectors and the use of formal examinations. In each case underpinning the chosen mechanism is a set of values and assumptions about the role of schools and the nature of teaching and learning.

In the Solomon Islands, formal externally set examinations are used at the end of primary school at grade 6 and then again at middle and senior years of secondary school. This practice indicates either a particular value being placed on external examinations as a reliable form of measurement of student learning (and teacher performance) and/or is a practical mechanism for ranking students, some of whom will given the opportunity to continue on the higher grades.

One teacher commented on the impact of the examination system:

> *The Standard 6 exams dominate, and we teach all four subjects. But in the Community Studies course, the final test has too few questions compared with the huge syllabus, and they ask almost the same things every year. In fact the whole curriculum is too crowded and the proportion sampled in testing is too small. The Cambridge test [pre 1988] was better.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

Discussions with teachers and principals in schools reported that the impact of the examination system on the value that many parents and students placed on examinable subjects created a hierarchy of subjects. Those subjects that were not examinable were less valued. One teacher commented that students reject the electives –

> *the core is holy ... once you've made the elite, you hang in there, and reject [elective] options.*
> *(secondary school teacher, Western Province)*

The provision of assessment procedures in education systems is a natural outcome of explicit statements of goals and objectives for the system. However in the Solomon Islands where no explicit statement of national learning goals appears to exist, the examination system assumes a role, ambiguous in terms of its educational purpose (ie assessment of learning), and at the same time a disproportionately important role in dominating the curriculum.

> *Because of the recent political tensions, the Standard 6 examination in 2000 was missed by many children in Guadalcanal, who have to repeat the year in 2001. On other islands, for example, Malaita, most schools stayed open*
> *(Deputy principal, Guadacanal secondary school).*

At present, principals and teachers report that some parents want an academic curriculum supported by the examination system, the leading route to what they hope will be future economic success for their children. The reality for most parents is that the stringent 'culling' process of the examinations result in the 'failure' of a majority of students in the grade 6 examination. These 'failed' and very young people are ill-equipped to enter most forms of paid employment. They lack both specific vocational skills and core generic skills like numeracy and literacy. In this context the current examination system is socially divisive, creating an elite minority of students who are deemed suitable to continue on with their schooling. The social areas of learning are not emphasised in the curriculum and are therefore not emphasised in the examinations. The creation of an under-class of young and not readily-employable people is unlikely to contribute to social harmony.

Nevertheless, despite their commitment to the importance of teaching academic courses, some teachers called for more vocational education, particularly in Forms 3 to 5, where they are quite rare. Many schools, in preparing balanced and focussed courses for their students, offer elective subjects which attempt, in a small way, to leaven the direct academic teaching. These are most commonly found at Forms 1 and 2 (sometimes 3), and commonly include "Industrial Arts" (usually woodwork), agriculture and home economics. The elective courses can be dovetailed to local village-oriented needs and possibilities.

Others looked for a larger policy change:

> *They should be able to go out to specialised schools once they've finished here, there should be a system designed to help mass drop-outs, pushed out at [Form] 3 or 5 ... provide learning that is rural-centred ... why did the government abandon vocational education? (Malaitan secondary Social Science teacher)*

Vocational education is seen as being in opposition to the current system of examinations. Examinations, as one mechanism to evaluate the extent of achievement of learning objectives, can play a critical role in giving directions to teaching and learning in classrooms. In fact examinations can be used as instruments to achieve social change as the nature of the questions asked in examinations determines the type of learning you want to occur. Examination of vocational learning outcomes could be undertaken if they were regarded as being of sufficient importance. This would loosen the grip of the current examination regime on curriculum and pedagogy in the Solomon Islands.

Physical conditions in schools

The concept of the democratic classroom with connotations of inclusiveness, equity and active participation, requires at least the ability to physically structure the classroom environment to incorporate such activities as group work and co-operative learning. It was the experience of the researchers that the physical conditions in schools varied greatly across the three visited provinces.

In the Western Province conditions vary. There is some overcrowding due to returning families, but little or no local tension. In other provinces, of course, the situation is very different, even post-Tension. Staff in two of the Malaitan schools visited reported that the land on which the school had been built was the subject of land claims and squabbles.

Physically, conditions in schools could often be described simply as 'atrocious'.

> *The pump on the water tower was vandalised last August, and we have had no water since. We have a generator, but the primary school over there has no water and no power. Skin diseases are rampant. When this school was set up we were lucky, but it was looted. Gas, the stoves that were in this room, all textbooks and support materials, labs and chemicals. The staff houses were emptied. We used to have an agriculture program but it was shut down during the Tension, so there are no more practicals because there are no tools. (Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

The main complaint at several schools was the poor quality of the boarding accommodation (part of these, at one school, had been closed in 2000 as a health risk and had still not re-opened) and the boarders' food.

Elsewhere, there was rarely any relief to a depressingly plain ambience – posters were rare, as was the posting of student work or other decoration. During the Tension resources were taken; one school had been stripped of literally all its print materials – syllabuses, teaching materials, books, papers – as well as equipment and much of its furniture.

Difficulty getting to school because of conditions existing was often a problem:

> *Some students and teachers come in [40 km] all the way from Auki. If they miss the bus, they miss school, and the road's getting worse. (Malaitan secondary school principal)*

Teaching and learning resources in schools

The whole issue of the availability of basic resources in schools was perhaps the most common operational matter raised by principals and teachers. It is unlikely that any school had 'a

complete set of curriculum documents/resources available to teachers', as the interview schedule asked. Other schools reported incomplete holdings of basic national curriculum documents (e.g. Gizo Community High School uses Papua New Guinea English syllabuses for Forms 2 and 3), and a common cry was *'we have only one copy of ...'* particular items. Often the copy was mutilated or incomplete.

The up-to-dateness of syllabi was another common issue. Many teachers alluded to the documents prepared and issued in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as trial versions which had never reached final form. Schools were incensed they had to pay for the Curriculum Development Centre-originated materials which they felt ought to have been on free distribution. Frequently orders sent off were not received.

> *I am happy with the curriculum, but not about the lack of class materials.*
> *(Malaitan primary school principal)*

Several buildings were seen to be signed, somewhat optimistically, as 'Library'. One had a single row of damaged books – another was quite empty. In one school, the only sign of any books was a large pile on the principal's office floor. At another:

> *In 2001 we borrowed one textbook for each subject, so everything has to be written on the blackboard. We have no photocopier, and it's all inefficient – students make small notes. We have to pick out what we can do from the syllabus.*
> *(Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

The absence of appropriate teaching and learning resources to enhance social learning is a serious impediment towards any improvement in social learning. The most vocal complaint by teachers about teaching and learning resources was the 'out-datedness' and the almost total absence of relevant culturally sensitive material.

The co-curriculum or extra-curricular activities

The so-called 'co-curriculum', involving extra-curricular activities in sport; inter-school visits; cultural activities; language activities of various kinds, is a very fertile field for exploration and enactment of civic virtue and values, but can be missed in a review of the formal curriculum documentation. Some schools, as part of the Physical Education syllabus have their pupils engage in organised sport activity per week. Additionally the students (more often the boys than the girls) engage in ball games in the break times. These activities connect to self-respect, health learning and socialisation objectives. In some schools a flow-on is within-school competition and in some schools, interschool competition.

> *Interschool tournaments, with town and country children, after the Standard 6 exams are bringing excitement and enjoyment to students.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

Many schools could not provide for sport activities

> *We have little sport. There is no money for equipment.*
> *(Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

One school had organised what it called an Expressive Arts Day, involving particularly Standard 6 children late in 2000 after the examination period:

> *There was dancing and singing, and it was very popular. The children were really involved. It was a show mostly for parents but the whole school was involved too. Good feedback from parents – they were very impressed and the other children really enjoyed it too.*
> *Expressive Arts should be in all school timetables but they're not taught because teachers don't have the background knowledge. And in town schools the multicultural nature of kids makes it even harder for teachers than in bush schools.*
> *(Malaitan primary school teacher)*

But generally speaking the children are on the streets each afternoon. Youth clubs cannot solve this problem. One student in the essay competition neatly summarised the issue:

> *Law and order will not be a problem when people are busy.*
> *(Form 3 boy, Western Province)*

One teacher remarked:

> *They leave school and go out on the streets to be devils. When they leave after Form 5 and still can't get a job, we have created a race of educated devils, better able to make guns and dynamite things.*
> *(Malaitan secondary teacher)*

The formal curriculum is not the only, and may not be the best, place to introduce real changes to the curriculum. Changes to learning outcomes for subsets of students like potential drop-outs might better be effected in the extra-curriculum.

Parent participation in school communities

Parent-teacher associations do occur, but do not abound. More often, parent involvement seems to be limited to working parties, for either building or maintaining school premises. Some committees for these purposes appeared to function well, but there was plenty of grumbling about slowness (or lack) of response by parents to schools which called for building help.

> *There's a new building due to start this month, but .... the parents were called but only a few came. We'll be doing more effort this weekend. We've got the funds all ready.*
> *(Malaitan secondary school principal)*

Sometimes it was the sheer size of the student catchment area (those who lived close-by got called out too often): sometimes just the difficulty of finding time when so much time and effort needed to be spent by families, in the prevailing straitened economic circumstances, just to keep themselves fed. As several teachers remarked:

> *Parents are too busy working in town, if they can get a job, to contribute much to the school.*
> *(Malaitan secondary social science teacher)*

Parents were often described as reluctant to pay fees and/or to visit the school, and these two observations may be closely intertwined. Some schools could count on their parents contributing.

> *Teacher and pupil attendance drops sharply on wet days, so the school board will meet today to discuss a new staff house. The money will come from school fees, bring-and-buys and bazaars.*
> *(Malaitan primary school principal)*

Other Malaitan schools have a regular school bazaar, to raise money for school fees of desperate families, and for additional funds for the school. Children often receive social and economic experience by running these themselves, even in primary schools. At another school, parents assisted by the local branch of Rotary, had put a new storey on the existing building, and then had paid a local worker "a mere pittance" to finish the job. But elsewhere, the situation was, or had been, different:

> *During the Tension it was the local community who looted the school.*
> *(Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

There were few examples of schools using parents as this school principal intended.

> *Next month teachers are being told to plan for greater parent involvement for the second semester, to help with hearing reading, etcetera. None at present.*
> *(Malaitan primary school principal)*

This project has identified a sense of community as an important dimension of citizenship. Schools are sometimes the major common experience for members of a community. If the members of the community feel positively about the effectiveness of the school, education

assumes a critical role in making a community a cohesive unit. The enhancement of social tolerance and cultural harmony relies on the continuation and sometimes modification of traditional cultural values. The development of community schools with genuine respect for community involvement and participation in policy making by central administrators is a very powerful resource in the enhancement of social harmony.

The language of instruction

The whole issue of what is the appropriate language of instruction is fraught. But there appears to be no systematic policy response being adopted to the issue. The formal position is that English is the language of instruction. But many parents and teachers want to value and maintain vernacular languages. This is a culturally-based position. The reverse positions include the usual reactions associated with the 'weakness' of a spoken language when in written form, as if spelling is the most important aspect of written language. Urban dwellers are inevitably more likely to be familiar with the formal written language (in this case, English) than those whose home culture does not include reading or signage.

Thus regional and equity principles are embedded in this issue, which drew an extremely mixed, regionally-based response from teachers and principals. The Malaitan view seemed to be that there were simply too many different local languages for any formal account to be taken of them at all. Yet a teacher in Gizo complained that there was no instruction in or of the local dialects. Similarly, reactions to Pijin were mixed. Some teachers discounted, even scorned, it and used only English. Others admitted its usefulness, and in places its necessity as a communication channel. The most common response was '*we use Pijin for speaking ,and English for writing*'.

> *In English information doesn't move quickly, so it's supported by Pijin.*
> *(Malaitan secondary school principal)*

At an urban primary school, a teacher made the following comment:

> *We use Pijin usually. But it's interesting, Auki (that is 'main town') kids are smarter, and being exposed to different entertainments, they use more language, and talk more than country kids.*
> *(Malaitan primary school teacher)*

Variations in language use make for difficulties in resolving what is the best approach. Local approaches are most likely to be the most appropriate, rather than a centralised policy which attempts to create nation-wide decisions.

SECTION 3: SYLLABUS REVIEW: SOLOMON ISLANDS'

Introductory Comments

As was commented in *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment,* difficulties were experienced in collecting the syllabus documents. The documents reviewed do not constitute a complete set by any means, and this mirrors the situation in all the Solomon Islands schools we visited, where none appeared to have a complete set. Initially no-one could provide us with a copy of the syllabus in Social Studies for Forms 1–3, clearly a crucial item, given our task description. Some teachers claimed never to have seen a copy, though one was located in a rural school late in the second visit.

Some of the curriculum documents which were read and reviewed, have not been reported in detail with the others in Section 3. Judgements about inclusion were made, generally supported by teacher opinion on the use they made of the material, as to the appropriateness of some syllabi to the social cohesion context. Those judged to not be clearly contextualised do not appear in the

review. One special case in point is the Nguzu Nguzu series. The Standard 3 Teachers Handbook was obtained from the CDC, but no teacher mentioned it in response to the curriculum questions asked of them, and no further copies of it were seen in classrooms. This is not surprising, given that it is an English (as a foreign language) course. We noticed that the course values the childrens' own experiences, as a basis for much of their writing and that the pedagogy, but it is not known how it is implemented in classrooms, and having no teacher feedback to amplify this point, we have not included it in the review. It models diverse and participatory pedagogy, and has potential as a model of this style of pedagogy.

One difficulty when reviewing syllabus and course materials, as was referenced earlier in Section 1 of this report, is how to determine the strength of the link between what stands ready to be developed in the document's content and what might become of such prompting in the classroom when the teacher enacts the materials. Classroom observation would need to be very extensive to enable generalisations to be made about links being manifested between syllabus documents and pedagogy. This project did not allow time for such classroom observation.

There is a need for the reader of this syllabus review to distinguish between teacher and student materials, for they are quite different in their content and objectives. One gains the impression that in many of the teachers' handbooks accompanying the syllabus prescriptions, the content is only designed to give teachers factual information (or access to it), in order to enable them to keep one step ahead of students in their knowledge acquisition. Suggestions for classroom treatments of any content included as information are rare indeed. Given the caveats mentioned earlier in relation to the limited range of pedagogies experienced by trainee teachers, both in their own schooling, and also in their training, the paucity of teaching strategies in the syllabi suggests that little by way of variation from the 'chalk and talk' style of teaching occurs in the Solomon Islands classrooms. Certainly the researchers saw little teaching at primary or secondary level which varied from this model.

The syllabus documents were analysed for their relevance to the knowledge and the issues which relate to social cohesion and tolerance. The syllabus review, which follows in this section, uses tables to map the content topics in the syllabi which have the potential to connect to such knowledge and issues. Prior's Citizenship Dimensions are again used to provide a locus for the interpretation of the substance of the materials. Section 4 of this report provides a detailed analysis by practitioners in Solomon Islands schools of how they teach the curriculum, and this syllabus review and mapping serves as context for that operational assessment.

Syllabus Analysis: Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. (1986, trial version). ***Social Studies: Forms 1–3 Syllabus***. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre.

Notes:
The syllabus is divided under theme headings, numbers corresponding to a Form level:
1 SOCIAL CHANGE
2 ECONOMIC CHANGE
3 POLITICAL CHANGE
Despite its importance, the notes on this syllabus are somewhat scanty, as the document was only seen in a rural school and hand notes taken: no photocopy or hard copy was available.

Reference	*Comments*		*Six Dimensions*
Form 1: emphasis on social change	1.1.5	Rules and leadership	D1, D4
	1.1.6	Communes and villages	D3
	1.2	Families (history; lineage; inheritance)	D2
	1.2.6	Duties, sharing and co-operation	D3, D5
	1.2.7	Authority and decision making	D1, D3-4,
	1.3	Communities	D6
	1.3.3	Case study of a community: themes include:	D3
		• emphasis on change in both SI and Pacific;	D1, D3
		• social and physical interactions and differences;	D3
		• co-operation and competition.	D4, D6
Form 2: emphasis on economic change	2.1	Physical environment and its relationship to humanity	D1
	2.2	Use of resources in the SI	D3
	2.2.1	Shifting cultivation	D3
	2.2.3	Plantations and their economy	D5
	2.2.7	Tourism	D5
	2.2.8	Manufacturing	D5, D6
	2.2.9	Preservation and conservation	D3
	2.3	Resources overview	
Form 3: emphasis on political change	3.1	History of political change in SI	D1
	3.2	Leadership and government	D1
	3.2.5	Law	D4, D6
	3.2.6	Pressure groups and labour	D1
	3.3	Systems: USA and USSR	
	3.4	Development and change	D1, D3
	3.4.3	Money	D1
	3.4.4	Population	D1, D5
	3.4.5	Urbanisation and employment	D1

Curriculum Development Centre. (1996). ***English Syllabus for Forms 1–5 in Solomon Islands Secondary Schools***. Honiara.

Notes:

The Overview (p.5) points out the important fact that for many students English is a third language, given the existence of indigenous languages and Pijin, and that all three are complementary components to language learning.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
General aims (p.7)	The aims are standard, heavily slanted towards grammar and usage, and relatively straight-forward. Three refer to relevant social science dimensions: • give the student the opportunity to gain personal enrichment; • reflect in English programmes the relationship between English and the cultures and languages of the Solomon Islands; • recognise English as an important SI language which gives Solomon Islanders an effective means of communication at an international level.	D2 D3 D1
Specific aims and objectives	Like the aims, the objectives are standard, heavily slanted towards grammar and usage, and relatively straight-forward. There are only two references in the long list of objectives to interaction and participation in group activities: one to class discussions and seminars, one to participation in role-plays and other dramatic performances: both of these as "Speaking" objectives.	D5, D6
Community and *kastom*	Modern Solomon Islander-written literature does not become apparent until Form 5, though collections of 'Custom Stories' are prescribed at the first two grade levels.	D1, D3
The place of Pijin	Pijin gets one mention: aim # 3 of the Literature syllabus reads: experience the dramatisation of literature in its various forms in both Pijin and English". (p. 16)	D1-3
Literature	Some of the student texts depend more on rote learning than might be deemed wise, and Pacific literature and issues may well be buried in others. But the syllabus makes no emphatic or key statements about classroom use of such literature, and the text-book lists for reading seem both sophisticated and extra-national.	D3
Critical Literacy	Only two mentions are made of critical literacy (of speech or text) as a crucial language learning factor, or a as a key guideline for teacher lesson-planning. One is in terms of text selection, rather than attention to authorial stance: the other is couched as "read critically and make value judgements" and applies at Forms 4 and 5 only.	D5, D6

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1998, 2nd ed.) ***Social Studies: Forms 4 and 5 Syllabus***. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre.

Notes:
The syllabus is divided under theme headings, one per semester:
Form 4:
- Conflict and Co-operation in the Modern World
- People and their Development

Form 5
- Industrial and Urban Growth
- Continuity and Change in the Solomon Islands

Theme 4 is dealt with in a separate student resource book, *Social Change in the Solomon Islands*, of which no copy could be obtained or sighted.
There is an interesting trifurcation of the Content descriptions into Content/Key Ideas/Opinion.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Basic aims	Students should: • be well-informed about their own and other selected countries social, economic, political and belief systems: • develop an awareness and understanding of the changes that have occurred in the past, and are now occurring in the social, political, and economic life of the Solomon Islands ....; • develop an awareness of their society's human and physical resources, the use of these resources to improve the quality of life, and the importance of conserving these resources and the environment in which they live; • develop an understanding and appreciation of the diversity yet interdependence of the peoples in the national and international communities; • develop the skills and attitudes need for them to be committed to play an active, useful and responsible role in the life of their own community, nation, and world as a whole.	D1 D1, D3 D1 D1, D3, D5 D2, D4-6
Skills to be mastered	All process skills (acquiring, analysing and interpreting information). There is no application of the Six Dimensions to be made in this section.	
Theme 1: Conflict and Co-operation in the Modern World	Ideology, conflict, war and attempts at co-operation are studied globally rather than with explicit reference to local conditions. No-one would gainsay the importance of realising just how recent history has developed, not the importance of issues such as apartheid, but one has the anxious experience of wondering just what was going on in their own communities when the students were in school learning about South Africa or regional co-operation in the rest of the Pacific. For example, the list of documents under 1.5 on p. 12 includes the Balfour Declaration (1917).	D1, D5

Theme 2: People and their Develop-ment	This theme includes matters such as human rights, social justice, and the uneven spread of aid and other benefits do get a look in. There is also a greater emphasis on the impact of various issues on the Solomon Islands themselves, and there is a whole section devoted to explaining what it is that students should have "formed an opinion on" during experience of the various pieces of course material. However, the treatments of: • 'economically active' and 'dependent' populations; • 'push-pull' factors in migration; • the "cycle of poverty"; seem to be solely in terms of benefits and disadvantages. This is an opportunity missed for discussion and propositions about solutions short and long term. Nor does there seem to be any attempt at a holistic treatment of many of these issues, which might assist the students' synthesis of major propositions for the civil society, and practice at evaluation of such matters. Several key ideas are worth quoting: • "development is not just about developing economies, it is also about the development of people, their living standards, and ideas and hopes for the future." (p. 21) • "it is sometimes the "wrong" people who benefit (e.g. the rich, urban dwellers and foreign aid donors) whereas the most needy people get little; e.g. the poor, women and rural dwellers." (p. 23)	D1, D3, D5 D5, D6 D3, D5
Theme 3: Industrial and Urban Growth	This theme seems to contain a large amount of material which could be called a 'post-colonial hangover'. The 3-field system of pre-industrial Britain does not seem germane to the rural life of the Solomons, though many of the 'side' issues relating to industrialisation and urban development as they affect the latter country are touched on at least. One would have preferred that the focus be local, and the historical treatment peripheral, rather than the reverse. Throughout the treatment of this theme, there is a heavy emphasis on conceptual definitions, and the matters on which students are expected to form opinions are often irrelevant or at best weakly related to the society in which these children are growing up. An opinion about 'whether the Solomon Islands has an adequate infrastructure to support modern industry' (p. 45) is not going to take long to formulate. Other prompts to learning, such as deciding 'whether it is a good thing to plan the growth of cities' (p. 47), are marginal at best, like the attention given to urban problems such as traffic congestion, green belts, and the special problems of inner city areas in the developed nations such as life in high-rise apartment blocks.	D1, D5

Some opinions to be formed	A brief selection: • the values and dangers of nuclear testing in the Pacific (theme 1, 4); • the successes and failures of regional co-operation (theme 1, 9); • how democracy and human rights will encourage development (theme 2, 1); • how the education of women affects birth rates and growth rates (theme 2, 2.1); • whether Solomon Islands should adopt a transmigration policy to relieve pressure on overcrowded islands (theme 2, 3.4); • whether the characteristics of Solomon Islands [agriculture] are changing, and whether this is good or bad (theme 2, 5.1); • whether the Cycle of Poverty is a problem in the Solomon Islands (theme 2, 5.2); • what would be the best types of manufacturing industry to develop in the Solomon Islands (theme 3, 2.2); • what aspects of situation may help or hinder the growth of a settlement (theme 3, 3.6); • which of these [urban growth] problems may be found in Solomon Islands urban areas and what solutions if any have been tried (theme 3, 3.10); • why [shanty town] people are so poor, and have nowhere else to go (theme 3, 3.12).	D5 D1 D4 D5 D3 D1 D5 D1 D3 D3 D4, D6

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Training, Department of Primary Curriculum. (1987). ***Community Studies Syllabus***. Honiara.

Notes:
"One important task of any educational system is to transmit the culture from one generation to the next, to preserve social stability and to pass on knowledge and skills. ... The Community Studies syllabus seeks to give primary school children an understanding of this social change and to build bridges between the old and the new value-systems."
The syllabus for each of Standards 1–6 is organised around six key concepts:

- Needs;
- Groups;
- Change;
- Resources;
- Rules;
- Environment

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Needs	• Basic needs; • Mass media; • Knowledge of the diversity of Solomon Islands culture; • Recognition of the desire to establish a national cultural identity.	D1 D1 D1-3 D1-3
Groups	• Custom, culture and outside influences; • regional and international organisations and agencies.	D1, D3 D1
Change	• understand factors associated with current social change and relate to standards associated with acceptable social behaviour in the community; • demographic study (population, settlement, family, religion and transport).	D1-4 D1
Resources	no relevant topic material	
Rules	• local, provincial and national government systems; • understand why standards are set which define acceptable social behaviour in the community; • knowledge of groups and organisations responsible for community safety and upholding law and order.	D1 D2, D4 D4, D6
Environ-ment	• knowledge of ecological and other characteristics of the Solomon Islands	D1

Attitudes which cut across all the above segments	• develop a tolerance of others like and unlike themselves; • gain a set of values on which to base personal behaviour (honesty; sincerity; responsibility); • value the importance of planning for the future; • value the need to preserve some traditional practices; • appreciate the need for groups and communities to live by a set of rules; • value the need to consider change carefully; • recognise the need to conserve natural and human resources; • develop a willingness to help others for desirable group goals; • develop an appreciation of the need to care for the environment.	D3, D4 D2, D6 D5, D6 D1, D3 D4 D5 D5, D6 D3 D5

Department of Education and Human Resources Development. (2000). ***Handbook for Curriculum Writers***. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre. Working Draft, 27 March, authors Franco Rodie and Janet Davy.

Notes:
As well as discoursing on the issues in the table below, this work includes comment on a number of technical issues, such as:
- guidelines for writing a syllabus;
- guidelines for writing a student book;
- guidelines for writing a teachers' guide;
- style, editing, format and layout.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Gender issues and the national school curriculum	sections on: • gender meanings; • gender differences; • gendered role concepts; • status of women; • gender in education; • social construction of language; • stereotyping and demeaning.	D1-6
Cultural issues	• strengthening beliefs and values in the school curriculum; • recognitions of cultures, customs and values; • making cultural contexts explicit; • how much change is to be encouraged; • alienation of people from cultures.	D1-3, D5-6
Sensitive issues	• sex education; • evolution theory.	D1

Summary Comments on the Syllabus Review

As is commented in the equivalent section of this report for Vanuatu, social tolerance starts with a knowledge and understanding one's own society, then those of others. The syllabuses are

indicative of what needs to be known – and teachers were critical of the content, in terms of its minimal local content and the Euro-centredness of much of which is prescribed:

Teachers who wanted to address social tolerance and related issues asserted they had to adapt what they had in the official documents, and the researchers support this position. There are comments about 'diversity yet interdependence of peoples in the national and international communities' or about people playing 'an active, useful and responsible role in the life of their community, nation, and world as a whole' (Solomon Islands, Social Science, Forms 4–6, p.2). But as has been demonstrated, the syllabus provides little encouragement and the exams little incentive to address such issues or adopt teaching strategies which might allow a divergence of views to be expressed in classrooms.

In the syllabi and other documents, social science 'skills' loom large, particularly at the factual acquisition and basic interpretation levels. Some of these we have classified elsewhere as 'civic knowledge'. Communication finds a place, but hardly ever the higher-order skills of testing of hypotheses, evaluation, and demonstration of personal commitment to the values and attitudes (let alone the actions) which are crucial to tolerance, harmony and co-operation.

Additionally, from the curriculum materials in the syllabus review and in the curriculum which teachers spoke of in the interviews, there is little explicit examination of attitudes such as tolerance, or respect for and celebration of difference. Nor is there any suggestion of how such attitudes might be enacted on a daily basis, what they might mean in practice. No mention is made of the difficulties we or others might have in reaching harmonious interactions and relationships. One Western Province teacher remarked: *'Schools need to teach social justice directly.'*

The most noticeable characteristic of the documentation accessed during this review process was the over-all ad hoc development of the syllabus over a number of years. There is a strong sense of the documents being written by different people, and with different agendas. There is no sense of a sequential and incremental framework. As with the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills in any other area of learning, the enhancement of social tolerance and harmony needs a structured and developmental framework to be integral to the curriculum.

The syllabus review demonstrates that the mere writing of a syllabus, cannot enable an observer or a participant to know what is being taught. Only the construction of a curriculum, where the pedagogy must be outlined and where it be as much the focus of the document as the content, will enable teachers to know what are the desired learning outcomes, and how possibly she or he may reach them. In no area of human learning can this be more true than it is of values and attitudes learning. The next section of this report provides an opportunity to hear the voices of the Solomon Islands' practitioners on matters associated with the actual operations of these curricula, in schools, and how these operations affect social cohesion, in the schools themselves, and in the broader society.

SECTION 4: ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS THROUGH THE SIX CIVIC DIMENSIONS: SOLOMON ISLANDS

Evidence of student acquisition of the dimensions of citizenship in schools can come from a range of sources. The most obvious is the extent to which the dimensions appear explicitly in curriculum documents. Another source of data came from discussions with stakeholders in schools – principals, teachers and students. Observations by researchers during visits to schools was a valuable source, particularly in the area of the hidden curriculum and informal school practices.

Dimension 1 : Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge refers to those understandings about the civic processes in any community. This is not to imply that these processes will take exactly the same form in every community. For young people to contribute to, and participate in, decision-making processes, they need a well-developed understanding of the institutions involved and the actual democratic processes of engagement as they relate to the institutions and in their society. Examples of civic knowledge include:

- Understandings about the decision-making processes in the community, for example, the role of village chiefs, pressure groups, elections and government
- Knowledge about civic institutions, for example, courts, parliament, schools, village chiefs
- Understandings about the legal requirements and obligations of citizenship, for example, becoming a legal citizen, paying taxes, voting at elections
- Understandings about the historical and cultural contexts in which a community exists, for example, knowledge about different island cultures, use of vernacular languages

Stakeholders in schools, including principals and teachers and parents, referred many times to the absence of topics in the curriculum regarding understandings about cultural traditions, civic institutions and democratic processes. Teachers in different parts of the country were often dismayed at the lack of suitable curriculum materials, particularly materials which focused on island traditions and practices.

> *Syllabuses are not geared towards certain islands and their cultural practices (Secondary social science teacher, Malaita)*

When asked the question about how to make schools and programs more sensitive to local variety, and students more knowledgeable about civic institutions and more responsive to cultural differences, the same teacher was clear:

> *Malaitans are very sensitive to certain words and about certain social actions which might go unnoticed on other islands. These things need to be sought out and collected, and included.*

Students frequently acknowledged the absence of topics about civic knowledge in the curriculum throughout their school life and expressed both their ignorance and disinterest in political matters. They commented that most teachers rarely commented on current political processes. There were some notable exceptions to this approach. A minority of teachers in different locations related to the researchers how they tried to actively engage their students in enhancing their understandings about democratic participation and traditional decision making practices. One teacher in a remote secondary school told how he regularly used newspapers and radio broadcasts to discuss current events.

No, it's not in the curriculum or in the exam, but I think it is important. I have... some trouble convincing students if it's not in the exam.
(Secondary teacher, Gizo Island)

The most common complaints from teachers were about minimal local content and the Euro-centredness of much of what is prescribed.

Much of the social science syllabus is from the 1980s and the copies say it is still in draft; when are we going to get the real thing? Much of it seems irrelevant – the USSR and the Berlin Wall have disappeared, and I leave out the section on plantation management and economy – plantations have gone too.
(Secondary teacher, Malaita)

Social science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status, and not only because of examination-directed learning.

English, maths and science are only useful if you get a job in town, a collar job. The distinctions between 'core' and 'minor' subjects should be abolished.
(Secondary social science teacher, Malaita)

The conclusion drawn by this study is that teachers mostly do not include classroom practices about civic knowledge as it is not examined in the external exams at Grade 6 and Form 9. Teachers so closely followed the national syllabuses in preparing students for the exams that any additional topics were often seen as distractions to the purpose of schooling. Students, as a result, remain ignorant of current political events and increasingly ignorant about their own cultural heritage. This absence of understandings about their own cultural traditions is particularly noticeable among students who live away from their home village and those who live in urban areas.

There were, however, some noticeable examples where a principal clearly articulated what he saw as a loss of traditional civic knowledge in the current national curriculum. In these instances, civic knowledge usually did not take a political form, but rather linked 'modern' economic knowledge to the world of paid work, and to understandings about traditional economic practices.

In forms 1 and 2 we teach them how to run a trade store, and in form 3 we teach single entry book keeping and traditional economic systems.
(Principal, Guadalcanal secondary school)

In this school this particular form of teaching and learning of civic knowledge was very well received by all members of the school community. Parents could see the relevance of the curriculum and were willing for their children to participate in the program. The program was outside of the formal curriculum, was not examined, but served a very useful social purpose. Programs like this appear to exist, however, in a small minority of schools.

A lack of civic knowledge as expressed in curriculum and daily school practices in the Solomon Islands is a serious impediment to the enhancement of social tolerance and democratic participation. While the acquisition of values, like social tolerance, is an element of the formulation of attitudes, students in schools need a foundation of civic knowledge in order to base their attitudes not on ignorance, but rather on informed judgements. In its place is the potential for prejudice, xenophobic behaviours and ignorance about appropriate democratic participatory practices.

Informal discussions with students in a range of schools re-enforced the view that they mostly lacked 'basic' understandings about the processes of government. To some extent this is not unusual as several other studies in other countries, for example, in Australia, in the 1990s, revealed similar ignorance (and disinterest) by young people about political processes. If governments want young people to be active participants in their communities (and this is an assumption) then young people in schools need to be informed about, and to practice,

participation in decision making in schools. This does not appear to be the case in the Solomon Islands.

Dimension 2 : A Sense of Personal Identity

The psychological theories of the development of positive personal identity, or a feeling of self-worth, are well grounded in the belief that the level of an individual's self-esteem is critical to that person being able to, or wanting to, relate or bond with another person or group. A willingness to empathise with, and be tolerant of, other diverse cultural groups or individuals is predicated on a sense of self worth and personal well being.

Respect was the single most powerful value label which interviewees mentioned in response to questions about school goals in the development of student personal value structures and good citizenship. A typical response by a teacher was as follows:

> *Self-reliance, good attitude, respect for others, teachers and one another; respect for their own learning and others' learning*
> *(Secondary teacher, Malaita)*

During discussions in schools, some principals and teachers reported that parents wanted an 'academic' curriculum, the leading route to what they hope would be a successful economic future for their children. It was not clear to the researchers what were the attributes of such an 'academic' curriculum, and there were doubts about the popularity of this desire. The suspicion was whilst most parents may hope their children would succeed in the exams, few were pleased with the educational outcomes for their children hat such parents were a very small sample of the total Solomon Island population. Some stakeholders in the Ministry of Education also reported that in their view that is what students want, too. It is one of the premises about good citizenship held by the researchers that a sense of personal identity, of self-esteem and a developed sense of efficacy are significant initial personal attributes required before generating a broader concern for the welfare of others.

An analysis of both curriculum documents and the allocation of time to various key learning areas as demonstrated on school timetables, clearly re-enforces the view that schools in the Solomon Islands spend little time assisting young people to develop other aspects of their well-being, apart from intellectual development. An examination of school programs revealed precious little time was devoted to both the physical and aesthetic development of students. These important elements in the development of a well-rounded identity were mostly missing from school operations. SICHE for example, does not currently have in training any future teachers of physical education.

Some schools, in preparing balanced and focussed courses for their students, offered elective subjects which attempted, in a small way, to leaven the direct academic teaching. These were most commonly found at Forms 1 and 2 (sometimes 3), and commonly included 'Industrial Arts' (usually woodwork), agriculture and home economics. This curriculum approach represents an effort at providing a schooling for students who were not suited to the mainstream. (Such programs were absent from any primary school with which the researchers came in contact.) One new secondary principal hoped to be able to

> *Design and run a big vocational education project, probably in agriculture. It will get kids together, raise money, and give them locally useful skills and experience.*
> *(Malaita, secondary school principal)*

One impact of the examination system was the growing number of 12/13 year old 'push-out' students who lacked any form of vocational skills. Work experience and careers programs only loomed large in one secondary school visited by the researchers. This school in Gizo mounted a four-week program for its Form 5 students.

It helps their self-reliance, maybe makes them industrious, and it helps us place some of our Form 5 leavers.
(Gizo secondary Social Science teacher)

The point was repeated by others in discussions about the development of self-esteem:

We have to think about their life after Form 3, but there is no work experience here yet. Form 3 is just a full stop. I'm thinking about encouraging them to get involved in electrical shop-work with a firm that does courses in Auki – repairs not computers or anything like that. I've written for brochures. The parents would have to pay. Form 3 should not seem the end, but it often does.
(Malaitan secondary school principal)

One area of the curriculum which appeared, both on paper in curriculum documents, and in the daily school operations, to consider the development of the whole person was the key learning area of Religious Education. Christian Education, however titled, was a common adjunct to the state-ordained core curriculum. The experience for students varied from nothing much more than singing religious songs and prayers to following a designed syllabus. In one school, it was slightly more important:

We have religious education with teachers from the churches for thirty minutes a week. And the class teachers take Christian Education for another thirty minutes, which is interdenominational.
(Malaitan primary teacher)

When teachers were asked directly where, for any student, the school experience focussed on personal values and personal development, the most common answer was "Christian [or Religious] Education":

It is here we talk about personal, moral and ethical issues in the Solomons
(Western Province secondary social science teacher)

A common regime in primary schools was to have Christian Education for half an hour a day, with stories, prayers, and singing in accordance with the primary syllabus. Religion is a powerful force in the Solomon Islands and any consideration of the good citizen needs to take into account religious foundation of peoples' daily lives. One explanation [Wintle, 1994] for the power of the Church (whatever denomination), rather than the nation, as a guiding source of morality and values, is that kastom finds it difficult to reconcile changes of party government with the long-standing traditional emphases on continuous authority, and indeed continuous respect, by those subject to this authority.

The personal identity aspect of citizenship is confronted in the Solomon Islands by the cultural notion of the collective good. This focus on community rather than individual has the potential for the collective good in family, village and island life. On the other hand teachers commented on how it manifested itself in classrooms with rooms of passive students who showed little initiative and who much preferred to be told what to do, rather than thinking for themselves.

Dimension 3 : A Sense of Community

People generally live in communities and generally undertake some form of interaction with that community. This social behaviour of belonging is rarely simple, as a complex set of rules and customs determine membership to a community. In some cultures, the family, the village, the clan, for example, became the belonging unit to which members had both rights and obligations. These rights and obligations may have been both formal, like the obligation to defend the community in times of war, or informal, like an expectation to marry within the community.

One of the major complexities and contestables now facing communities in the twenty-first century is that the sense of locating oneself in a community has undergone profound changes.

The Solomon Islands has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves. The most recent ethnic tensions, more obvious over the past two years, has only brought to the surface the sensitivities involved in attempting to cohere diverse communities in one location.

A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. In the Solomon Islands a centralised, national, rather than a local or provincial, education system is in place. There are a number of cultural and historical explanations for this management model. The earliest forms of formal schooling were organised by churches and not local communities. The recent achievement of nationhood shifted the balance of management from the churches to the nation and again local communities played an insignificant role in developing the nature of school education. Post-colonial schools therefore generally have only marginal connections with local communities. This situation is exacerbated by the continuation of the tradition, started by missionaries, of creating boarding schools at the secondary level. The very recent development of the establishment of community schools by the national government could be seen as an attempt to redress the isolationist factor in schooling. A cynical view might be that it is an attempt to shift the financial responsibility of running schools from the national government to the community.

A positive disposition towards social tolerance requires a sense of community and the field work visits to schools investigated the prevalence of this dimension in schools. On one level schools themselves are communities, but to what extent do schools in the Solomon Islands consciously promote a sense of belonging? The answer to this question may well be part of the hidden curriculum, although some symbolic evidence was examined. Students generally wore a school uniform and this is an example of a symbol of community. At the primary school classroom level, in particular, teachers worked hard at promoting tolerance through supporting pedagogies.

> *Teachers stimulate co-operation, and sort of 'put the children' together for a sense of school community, so they understand what the school is. And we hope they go back and do the same for their villages ... we have a huge catchment area – some kids walk two hours each way – and the villages are not necessarily in the same clan area or speak the same language.*
> *(Malaitan primary principal)*

The most eloquent and encompassing statement of the issue (and some specific suggestions for how to improve the school programs) came not from a teacher but from a student writer in the essay competition:

> *One of the ways of bringing back and maintaining peace and harmony is to use the socio-political structure of the village, by making use of the village chiefs who arrange programs for the community. Programmes that will help teach the people about the importance of working together and building a better community through inductive teaching, learning self-decision making and through drama and social activities we can also focus on helping the people, especially parents, who can then teach their children to make better decisions on life that will help maintain peace permanently.*
> *(Form 5 boy, Guadalcanal province)*

Another student in the essay competition summarised the issue clearly, and took the argument a stage further:

> *As a community of different backgrounds it is vital that people live with respect for one another, tolerate our differences and being supportive. In relation to this, our community must work together in reconciliation rather than seek for state governing.*
> *(Form 2 girl, Guadalcanal province)*

The need for social tolerance and social harmony at the national level, as a panacea for bringing disparate and sometimes warring sections of the community together, was mentioned over and over again by stakeholders in schools. Yet the researchers found little evidence of practical and simple symbolic actions being undertaken by schools to promote social harmony at the local

level. This lack of effort to "localise" the curriculum was reported as the business of the national system, not the local practitioners:

> *Teachers should be specifically trained to teach culture in schools.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

At one Gizo school, the principal complained that there was no instruction in locally important creative arts styles and techniques. At this school, there was something of a call for 'basic skills' instruction, using local traditions, stories, and myths. The school principal told researchers that at the top of this 'wish list' was the building of a community 'kastom' hut. Researchers could neither establish why he had not gained community support for such an activity, nor implemented it.

Nevertheless, some individual teachers were active and skilled in 'massaging' the curriculum to incorporate local community perspectives and incorporating pedagogic practices like co-operative learning into their classroom activities. But such teachers were rare finds.

It was the cause of surprise to researchers that the National Anthem was never reported as being sung, and one school had just ordered its first-ever national flag, which it intended to fly when it arrived. When such obvious customs of social cohesion are unsupported by school systems, it is hardly surprising to find few examples of symbolic cohesion happening in classrooms. The research team concluded that there was little evidence of wholé school approaches to the promotion of a sense of community, whether it be at the school, local village and/or the national arena.

The big impression is that schools were so overwhelmed with 'survival' issues that they rarely speculated about how things could be changed to be different or better. As a result schools were not seen as part of the community, but rather a place where children went for part of the day. Secondary schools are seen as being quite distinct from their location, generally not part of the local community at all. An important consideration for policy makers, therefore, is how to harness the energies of local communities to support public education. Part of the answer lies in curriculum renewal. The other part lies in giving schools permission and the power (and the confidence) to engage the local community in policy making in their schools. Given the complex geographic nature of the Solomon Islands, an increase in the role and authority of provincial education offices is clearly warranted.

Dimension 4 : Adoption of a Code of Civil Behaviours

Members of communities of all types operate within a code of behaviours which collectively form the values and customs and traditions of the community. Communities generally have ways and means of initiating new members into the community (and of excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term a 'civil society' describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by its members, in order to maintain the code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin codes of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need to come to some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Civil societies embrace codes of civil behaviours which support community values and traditions. Schools can play a critical role in laying the foundations for young people of the codes of behaviour expected in an adult civil society. Values like tolerance and social justice carry with them appropriate ways of behaviour which enact the values. Schools can support positive civil behaviours in a number of ways. In a formal sense the curriculum can include topics and issues about a 'civil society'. Schools can adopt rules and activities which promote civil behaviours.

And on the level of the hidden curriculum teachers can model, consciously or not, certain behaviours which it is hoped young people will emulate outside of school.

Under Dimension 1 the role of religious education as a form of civic knowledge was discussed. In the religious education curriculum it was noted how aspects of moral and ethical behaviour were formally promoted as a basis for life long action. Apart from this curriculum aspect of approaching teaching and learning about appropriate civil behaviours, there appears to be little other evidence of formal positive approaches.

One teacher made the claim that :

> *All our school rules are derived from Christian principles.*
> *(Malaitan secondary social science teacher)*

Three discipline policy modes were observed. In one primary school, corporal punishment was resorted to for fairly major misdemeanours. In most schools visited, the leading punishment strategy was school maintenance and grounds work after hours, generally on a fixed schedule, though in one school, such punishment was always delivered 'on the spot'. Misdemeanours could be classified as minor (e.g. lateness; swearing; failure to obey teacher commands) and major (e.g. defacement and graffiti; destruction or theft of others' property; violent behaviour in varying degrees). It was rare that parents became involved in the discipline process except for major misdemeanours such as theft, when often the police became involved as well, especially if the crime was committed off-site (two such cases were being investigated from schools visited).

This school utilised cultural knowledge in its approach to student discipline .

> *Villages have their own list of by-laws. There are shell-money penalties for things like drunkenness and disorder. We photocopied them so we wouldn't make mistakes.*
> *(Malaitan secondary principal)*

Another formulated its discipline policy and goals slightly differently:

> *We try to work on behaviour, attitudes, such as respect for teachers, other students – and teach them to hold back from provocation in kastom disputes.*
> *(Malaitan secondary school principal)*

Yet another Malaitan secondary school developed a work and maintenance strategy in relation to discipline. It had unexpected side effects:

> *Interviwer: Is the school the place to promote values?*
> *Respondent: Yes, in its discipline policies. But our discipline policy – brushing, cleaning, maintenance after school – rebounds. They like the work, they find it fun, and the fat ones lose weight...*
> *(Malaitan secondary teacher)*

It was the impression of the researchers however that very few schools offered opportunities for positively rewarding students who demonstrated appropriate civil behaviours. There appeared to be, for instance, few opportunities for students to be involved in decision-making in their schools.

As a student in the essay competition put it:

> *Co-operation is a medicine that kills the sickness of hatred.*
> *(Form 2 girl, Makira province)*

The appointment of prefects and dormitory leaders were usually seen by teachers as an adjunct for 'peace-keeping' in the school. Leadership potential was equated with skills in policing.

Officials of the Solomon Islands' Ministry of Education were, at the time of the second visit, conducting what was called a strategic review of the educational operation, the third such in as many years. This top-down administrative structure of the Ministry and Provincial operations is mirrored in school processes. Teacher modelling can be an issue too. Such principled values,

attitudes and behaviours as do appear in some syllabuses are not necessarily modelled by teachers, in the Solomon Islands, for example, with absenteeism and various other sorts of unprofessional behaviour apparently, or at least reportedly, rife.

The observation of school operations in the area of civil behaviour in the Solomon Islands has to seen in the context of the continuing political unrest. Schools from all three locations visited by the researchers reported some form of dislocation to 'normal' student behaviour and directly attributed this to the violence associated with the tension. In some cases schools were closed for months at a time while disturbances occurred at their very entrance. Other schools reported looting of teaching and learning resources. Others reported teacher intimidation by visiting and armed gangs.

> *In Form 3 there are only eighteen (students) but they are coming back. In the Tension and since, the kids were very unsettled: they find something hard, they leave.*
> *(Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

To a large degree this context forms the rationale for this project, and school have had to cope with these situations as best they can with little, if any, support from the national government through the Ministry of Education. Some schools squarely faced the disruptions by adopting a very positive and encouraging approach.

> *The returning students are usually eager to learn, but a few haven't settled and need counselling. We have no punishment at all. It's talk; reinforcement; support; counselling. And it's working. It's [counselling] done first by the deputy principal, and then all staff. Based on questions exploring family background. It's much better than punishment.*
> *(Guadalcanal secondary teacher)*

The research team was left with the impression that the impact of a hierarchical model of school management, re-enforced as it is by the same approach within the bureaucracy, left students with few opportunities to initiate and engage in behaviours which might contribute to social harmony.

Dimension 5 : An Informed and Empathetic Response to Social Issues

As much as we might like to think that many communities operate as socially harmonious units, twenty-first century pressures emanating from individuals, groups and global forces, invariably impact on the daily practices and values of communities. These pressures, and the varied impacts they cause, simply cannot be ignored in a society already under considerable tension. Most communities engage in making some form of accommodations and adjustments to these pressures and issues. One of the tensions for communities and their education systems is the extent to which information and understandings about contentious social issues can be discussed within the communities. Even acknowledgment of the existence of issues such as AIDS, gender discrimination, teenage pregnancies, youth ennui and poverty immobilises some communities.

An effective democratic community is one that encourages discussions about contentious social issues and addresses them using inputs from the community. Social cohesion will not be achieved in an environment of ignorance, prejudice and complacency. The recent reported increase in the use of drugs amongst the young in the Solomon Islands and even the now widespread use of outboard motors using high priced fuel, are just two other examples of changing practices which are placing huge pressures on traditional values and are creating a range of social tensions and adjustments.

A sense of citizenship requires both an informed understanding of social issues and also a sensitive and empathetic response to the issues. The disposition towards social tolerance and mutual understandings cannot be fully developed with just an emotional response. It requires both a cognitive response and an attitudinal response.

In the current context of national curriculum which focuses on the recall of unproblematic aspects of knowledge and the development of a limited range of cognitive skills, there was little evidence of students actively engaging in discussions about social issues. Observations of school and classroom activities indicated that students were mostly uninformed about current social, political and economic issues and therefore were unlikely to form an empathetic disposition towards issues outside of their experience or knowledge. To some extent this situation reflects a particular philosophical approach to teaching and learning and is embedded in discussions about what's worth knowing.

It is the view of the researchers that the assumptions and values underpinning the current curriculum model, whether they be consciously held or not, reflect a transmission, rather than a transformative, model of education. For the most part the examination system re-enforces this approach to learning by posing questions which require little more than memory recall. It has been mentioned in other places in this report how the examination could be used as a means to give a different focus to teaching and learning.

Some schools reported little or no discussion of pertinent social issues.

> *The examinations don't ask for them... The students aren't interested... At this school it is difficult to keep up with outside current events and issues.*
> *(Western Province Social Studies teacher,)*

In the issues that are included in the more senior years of the secondary curriculum, teachers complained about an undue focus on large problems and conflicts, rather than more-easily understood and more basic issues which are smaller in scale.

> *In the current social studies syllabus, the inclusion of issues about the Cold War are of no relevance to my students. What we need is encouragement in the curriculum to choose local issues.*
> *(Gizo teacher of Social Studies)*

Social Science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status, not only because of examination-directed learning. Until this is no longer a live issue, teachers of Social Studies will be disappointed and under-utilised.

It is the view of the researchers that culturally appropriate social issues should be included in the curriculum. A willingness to respond positively to cultural diversity and to engage in some form of social action are hallmarks of citizenship education. The decision about which issues is clearly one for educational policy makers in the Solomon Islands. It is the observation of the researchers however that issues like conflict resolution, conservation of cultural heritage, drug use, AIDS, and environmental awareness, are worthy of consideration. The social studies curriculum appears to be the most obvious key learning area for the inclusion of social issues. It is in this area that the rhetoric of skill development espoused in the current curriculum documents could be applied to the investigation of social issues.

Dimension 6 : A Disposition to take Social Action

Asking the question, " What do you think education should be for?" is a provocative question in a discussion about the purposes of schools. The role of citizenship education in the school curriculum is like this big question in that it makes no sense at all if it lacks a purpose, or a practical application. Like the goals of education, the goals of citizenship are both contestable and problematic. An agreed vision of the world in which you hope young people might live happily and productively is needed, in order to give definition to conceptualising citizenship. It is a values clarification exercise, linking visions of the good life to the role education can play as an instrument of change.

Formal schooling is but one stage in learning, so to confine citizenship learning to the classroom divorced from the realities of the real world is largely a waste of time. There is little point in being a 'classroom citizen', because only a few people benefit from your actions. The bottom line for any effective social education programme is that students actually have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values which they willingly and purposefully offer to the broader community. In other words they become active contributors to their community. A 'good' citizen is one who does pick up rubbish in the community, who does vote, who actively engages in community affairs. In other words they take some form of action.

Some examples of how social action might be demonstrated by young people in schools include:

- Being actively engaged in community service
- Writing to newspapers about social issues.

There is now a large body of evidence that indicates that taking action mostly doesn't come naturally. (Knight, 1999) School is an appropriate place in which young people can learn to take action. For young people, to develop a positive disposition to contribute to their community, they need to practice taking action, facing the consequences, and becoming contributing independent members of the school community. Schools need to develop structures and practices which allow young people to practice citizenship. When young people do not have experiences in showing initiatives and taking action, they lack a repertoire of appropriate actions from which to choose.

In this study, this dimension of citizenship received limited acknowledgment. Stakeholders from the education sector and usually with experiences of studying overseas were enthusiastic about child-centred learning, constructivist curriculum and the democratic classroom. When teachers were questioned about 'child-centred pedagogy', only a few understood the meaning of the term and its implications for their practice. When further confronted with the term 'democratic classroom', few teachers were aware of its meaning or implications.

However, in one school in Malaita, the latter expression had meaning, and the principal reported a successful example of school practice of social action. The secondary school concerned wished to ignore a Ministry edict that schools should lower the school fees by 20 percent, given the worsening economic crisis in Solomon Islands society. The staff agreed but first students were asked to confer with their families about the possibility of keeping fees as they were. Class meetings were held, and the students voted that the school should follow the edict, and fees were lowered accordingly. When questioned about the student response to this process, the principal suggested that a stronger sense of 'school community' had developed amongst students after that opportunity.

More conventional modes of student participation, such as prefect systems or class captaincy, were usually in place in most secondary schools. Student Representative Councils were however, not a common feature. The most common response to questions about student governance or participation in management was *'Children have no say.'* (There were also occasions when staff commented that they had no say in decision-making, let alone the students.) Some schools saw student participants in terms of assisting in the maintenance of school rules.

> *In our school, all Standard 6 pupils are 'prefects'. And class captains supervise and control lower grade pupils during health inspection.*
> *(Malaitan primary teacher)*

Other examples include all students from one school having participated in general community activities, such as the 'clean-up' of Auki town organised by the International Peace Monitoring Team earlier in the year, and a significant percentage engaging in regular community service arranged by the church youth groups they belonged to.

One student, writing in the essay competition, had a very clear view of the importance of this civic dimension, for individuals and governments.

> *For the betterment of us all, leaders must work together with the ordinary people at all times. People must insist on the partnership and dialogue with leaders in the government and other organisations. The government must encourage people to participate effectively in the process.*
> *(Form 5 boy, Guadalcanal province)*

Summary Comments on the Operational Assessment by Practitioners

Visits to a wide range of schools in three location in the Solomon Islands to assess the extent to which school practitioners incorporated issues of social tolerance and harmony into their daily practices, revealed a great disparity between what might be called the 'good intentions approach' of practitioners and the realities of what actually operated in schools.

The most common groups of practitioners interviewed by the researchers were principals and teachers of Social Studies. Principals (all males) were sympathetic to the inclusion of social education in their school operations and they commonly expressed the view that schools have an important role to play in the enhancement of social tolerance. In no school was a whole school plan in place to promote social learning. Rather, some principals could point to a particular school activity which they argued enhanced social learning. It was the impression of the researchers that this lack of a whole school approach was the most significant impediment to the enhancement of social learning in schools in the Solomon Islands. At a symbolic level, the flying of the national flag and the singing of the national anthem are minimal cost activities which can be easily incorporated into every schools' operations. On no occasion were these two activities observed, and, in fact, most principals commented that the school did not own a flag. Here is a lost opportunity to enhance social harmony and to strengthen national citizenship.

Some teachers and principals expressed support for the development of their students as citizens, but few saw this as the central aim of the present school curriculum. The most common argument was that assisting students to pass the examinations was what schools were mostly about. This view was sometimes said in tones of despair and this suggested that some practitioners want change. The reality is that on both scores the system is failing students. A vast majority of students cannot continue on at school after grade 6 while at the same time social learning directed towards future citizenship is mostly ignored.

Visits to schools revealed that practitioners, both principals and teachers, were uncertain about appropriate school and classroom pedagogies to promote social learning. At the school level, for example, few opportunities appeared to be given to students to demonstrate civic initiatives. The practice of student leadership positions was generally reported by practitioners in the context of assisting teachers to enforce school rules. At the classroom level, for example, teachers, particularly in secondary schools, appeared uncertain about giving students responsibility for aspects of their own learning.

Since Social Studies is not part of the examination system, it is less likely to occupy teaching time than it nominally should. However, ideally, as one teacher wanted, schooling should be the big opportunity to '*balance spiritual, academic and social expectations and development*', and Social Studies has the potential to play a big role in this development. However Social Studies teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status. This was not only because Social Studies is not examined, but it is not seen as contributing directly to employment.

Discussions about the kinds of skills all students need for their future lives has the potential to enhances the role of Social Studies in schools, but teachers and principals in particular need to be

able to see a range of ways in which these skills can be delivered to students. An emerging interest in the generic competencies might be a foreshadowing of the re-emergence of Social Studies. Social Studies has the potential to play a substantial role in the curricular and pedagogoic development that relates to a emphasising of the social domain. With its emphasis on evidence, hypothesising, working together in groups, the power of values and empathy, and a sensitivity to a range of ways of problem-solving etc, Social Studies is well positioned to embody those social learning competencies.

Teachers supported curriculum renewal especially in social education. A key issue for them in promoting social harmony was the total lack of teaching and learning materials about the cultural diversities of each of the Provinces in the Solomon Islands. The argument was often made by teachers that students often lacked a detailed understanding of their own island culture and that teachers who taught in provinces not of their own background, also lacked knowledge and teaching materials about the cultural practices of their school community. The teachers were not surprised at their students' lack of interest in the cultures of other provinces given students had not been encouraged to learn about their own personal cultural customs and practices. Frequently teachers were not able to provide any detail, and this lack of knowledge indicates a low level of interest, which will need addressing.

The culture in the school had a major impact on the capacity, and preparedness, of staff to step outside the models of 'real knowledge' as defined by the exam questions or by a minimalist reading of the syllabi. Whilst most practitioners professed great interest in the issues of social coherence and the future of the nation... they did not allow it to impinge on their practices.

Schools were generally very undemocratically organised, with most students having little chance to develop or practice empathy or leadership, except of the most moribund nature. Having to be in charge of things (such as achieving silence in the classroom) or for the disciplining of others is not sufficiently akin to being responsible for oneself, to be a useful learning experience. Schools which have boarders should be able to create communities which are vibrant and self-managing, and there appear very few of those.

SECTION 5: CONTEXTUAL ISSUES TO AN OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICES: VANUATU

Schools Visited

Efate Island:	Onasua High School*	rural
	Port Vila Central Primary School	urban
	Lycee Louis Antoine de Bougainville	urban
	College de Montmartre	urban
	Malapoa High School*	urban
Tanna Island:	Lowanatom Junior Secondary (Technical) School*	rural
	Lowanatom Primary School	rural
	Lenakel Junior Secondary School*	rural
	College d'Isangel Junior Secondary School*	rural
	Tafea Junior Secondary School*	rural
	Dip Point Primary School	rural
	Ienaula Junior Secondary School*	rural
Espiritu Santo Island:	Santo East Junior Secondary School	urban
	College de Santo*	urban
	Matevulu College*	rural
	Hogharbour Junior Secondary School*	rural

* Boarding schools

General Comments on the Vanuatu Education System

The education system in Vanuatu is one stretched to the limits of its funding. Assistance is provided from outside the country by NGOs and governments, and whilst this aid is well received, it is not in the control of the Ministry, and is not always distributed where or in the manner the Ministry thinks best. Being post colonial and poor is not an easy situation to be in.

The archipelago is huge and the sheer distances and poor communications exacerbate many difficulties for administrators and practitioners alike. The system of provincial administration appears to be a good one, although it is reliant upon good relations between the Provincial Education Officers (PEO) and the central office of the Ministry. Personal relations are not always cordial. When the PEO is respected by his or her regional practitioners, the system is powerful in keeping practitioners informed and supported in their professional development. Belonging to the location in which they are working is a crucial element in their effectiveness. The researchers were not surprised to find that PEOs who worked in the communities in which they had been children were well-respected, even loved. They were of course, also consummate professionals.

Lack of funding is the main reason for many of the stresses experienced by both administrators and practitioners, and witnessed by the researchers. Traditions, sometimes of very short duration, tend to mean that alternative ways of allocating funds are not fully examined. These traditions also are used as justification for complaint when systemic changes are undertaken, and not explained. There is a sense in schools that the Ministry should be able to solve problems it cannot. This sense of disempowerment is more profoundly felt when other matters, such as some of the following, constantly irritate.

The role of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) is not clearly defined. It is also poorly-funded, and is thus doubly unable to fulfil the expectations teachers in schools have of it. Its handful of staff are inundated by requests from the field they cannot accommodate. Thus it is seen as inefficient, which it is, but it is unjustly blamed for this condition. Little curriculum development has occurred over the last decade, and practitioners argue it is critically undervalued. Whilst the CDC may have a plan of curriculum review, it is not a plan teachers can recognise. Curriculum development is not contributed to by practitioners, nor are they engaged in the development of the curriculum materials. Thus practitioners do not feel ownership of the curriculum. Criticism is rife that the physical strength of the materials is inappropriate for school use. The materials are thus reviled on a number of scores. The recent decision, taken by the Ministry, that schools will have to pay for all class sets of curriculum documents ordered from the CDC has had serious reverberations in the way practitioners regard the CDC. The whole process of curriculum review and provision is now one of perceived failure. Clarification of the CDC's role could assist in rejuvenating the content of the curriculum so that it contributes to the social coherence of education, and the management of the process of curriculum development

Contextual Comments to Curriculum Analysis: Vanuatu

Teacher training

There is a shortage of trained teachers in secondary schools in Vanuatu. However this shortage is being addressed by the Vanuatu-Australia Secondary Teacher Education Program (VASTEP), where Aus-Aid funding has rejuvenated the training of secondary teachers. The program's first graduates, and Vanuatu's first new Anglophone secondary teachers for 8 years, will be available for appointment to Vanuatu schools in 2002. They are being eagerly awaited by schools in the provinces, and already some of the first graduates to-be have been informally approached by schools, especially where they are local people and therefore known by the school community. It is confidently expected by current practitioners that the VASTEP teachers will have been better trained than their forbears and will be more skilled in conducting open classrooms and relying less on hierarchy for their discipline.

Primary teachers seem not to be in short supply, though they are moved around the country rather often. It was reported that this movement, and lack of explanation for it, unsettles school communities: staff, parents and children. As a group the primary teachers interviewed seemed able to run any kind of classroom, and a range of pedagogies were employed.

To ask how well teachers are trained is to seek to examine their pedagogy. Researchers found that those teachers interviewed and observed in class generally reflected the school's approach. Regimented schools had teacher-centered, lecture-style, fact-based teaching. Those schools with a more open approached to curriculum and student learning had classes with looser desk patterns, students worked in groups and discussion was a normal part of the pedagogy. The influence of the principal on the tenor of the classrooms in the school was paramount, far in excess of the impact of the curriculum. Teachers who had the opportunity to work in teams, and with the looser structures seemed quite comfortable with the pedagogic demands, and even revelled in them. It appears therefore that those who have been trained have been able to accommodate such demands. This was more evidently the case in primary schools, though this was perhaps because most of the primary teachers had been trained as teachers. Secondary teachers who were trained understood the concepts associated with open pedagogy, and were able to converse about pedagogic options.

Post-training of teachers occurs irregularly it seems. In Vila principals said there was virtually no professional development their teachers could undertake, though some were studying in their own time. But in Tanna, for example, primary teachers were regularly involved in workshops and this

has enabled them to stay in touch with curriculum review and changed methodologies. The role the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) plays is crucial to the success of this process. It also enabled the PEO to then have contact with other practitioners. These outcomes assist in the creation and maintenance of teacher confidence and morale. It is important teacher training.

Teacher professionalism and morale

Teacher morale, it was asserted, is affected by the kind of principal the school has, the sense of community between teachers and the sense the teachers and the school has that the administration is aware of, appreciative of, and responsive to, their work. On Tanna, for example, the role of the inspector in the primary system is supportive of teachers, and with the assistance of the School Advisory Officers (Anglophone and Francophone) the teachers achieve better teaching standards, and there is a strong sense of morale and self respect in the primary teaching service. But there is no secondary inspector and the secondary teachers wish they could have one. They were generally professional in their expressed desire to become better teachers, but they feel they are unable to achieve this alone.

Where the principal was able to inject a sense of professionalism in her or his staff, it was remarkable the difference that was produced, in the teaching and in the students. This was reported in schools where teachers had experienced poor principalship, but now were in a better situation. These teachers could make the comparison. It was obvious to the researchers where unprofessional principalship was evidently impacting on the tone of the school and the capacity of teachers to do their job. In poorly-managed schools, teachers gave up and remarked often that there was nothing they could do (about inadequate or inappropriate curriculum, student discipline, the negative effect of the exams, the lack of resources, payment of school fees etc). In well-managed schools, teachers (and the principal) thought they should attempt to ameliorate these conditions, and they prepared and adopted strategies which did, in part, address these issues. Sometimes, increasing the involvement of the parents was seen as a strategic move to reduce the problems. In others such a strategy was seen as an interference, and it was rejected as inappropriate.

Teachers were well aware that the treatment they received from the education authorities was not often affected by the quality of their work. This was seen as a crucial matter. They wanted good teaching to be recognised, and for some acknowledgment to be forthcoming from the authorities. They want some systemic approach to teacher support, teacher development, teacher quality and promotion of those who are worthy of it. Teachers were very clear that until there is a policy of promotion of those who are good at, and caring about, their work, then no amount of curriculum change or increased resourcing will improve learning outcomes in schools. The most valuable resource a school system can have is its teachers.

The importance of skilled and committed teachers was demonstrated most poignantly in one remote rural primary school, where the teachers were almost the only resource, and the children were in large groups (approx 40+ per class), they lacked sufficient desks/tables in all classes so most of the children sat on the floors. The teachers were however clear about the intent and importance of education in Vanuatu. All their children from grade six had passed last year and had gone on to secondary school, and the classrooms were full of teacher and student work which showed innovative and collective approaches to the teaching of social issues. The teachers in this school demonstrated pride in the work of education, and the parents were actively involved in the school. The principal regarded his staff and the parents as natural allies in the business of the school. Everyone at the school felt pride that they were doing a good job, but they were all seriously oppressed by the abysmal resources and physical conditions they worked with, and by the lack of recognition they had received for their work. *'Does anyone take notice or care?'* they asked. Morale was good in professional terms, but poor in administrative terms.

Teachers and principals need a recognition and promotion process which will result in the better practitioners amongst them progressing and having a greater impact on schools. Until this is set in place, random allocation of staff to schools will continue, with varying but not the more positive incremental effects on schools. It will also discourage those staff who do care, and who do have professional pride, from attempting to resolve difficulties at the school level. At the present staff feel good teachers are treated in the same way as lazy or untrained or unskilled ones, and they wish it were otherwise. Salaries are low and teachers, trained at state expense, move out of teaching to other careers. The education system of Vanuatu cannot afford to under-utilise the personnel resources it has developed at such cost.

Teacher readiness for cultural and social curriculum

If a greater emphasis is to be placed upon social and cultural concepts in the curriculum, if the profile of these concepts and issues are to be raised as learning outcomes in education, teacher readiness to deliver such a curriculum is crucial. The researchers believe most teachers place a high value on social and cultural concepts as legitimate learning outcomes for schools. They believe that the existing teacher workforce is also reasonably well prepared to deliver such curricula. They will need leadership from within the education system, and from their peers. For that leadership to be evident to them some process of identifying and acknowledging good teachers, those with a strong sense of cultural and social norms being legitimate learning outcomes for primary and secondary students, will need to be in operation.

Teacher-readiness is of course predicated on the recognition by the education system of the need, and on the preparedness to provide appropriate resources and professional development for teachers. In Vanuatu it is believed that teachers can deliver these outcomes, with appropriate support.

The examination system

As was commented in *Report 1:Stakeholders Assessment,* the provision of formal education systems is a very costly item in national budgets, and in the context of global economic uncertainties the desire to get value for money is strong. Currently there is a world wide interest in ways and means of measuring school effectiveness both in terms of student learning and in terms of general cost-effectiveness. Countries have adopted a range of evaluation mechanisms including school reviews, the use of inspectors and the use of formal examinations. In each case underpinning the chosen mechanism is a set of values and assumptions about teacher performance and the nature of teaching and learning.

The selected mechanism to evaluate student learning can have a profound effect on a community's perception of the extent of social justice within the education system. Any sense of unfairness, malpractices and inefficiencies can result in a loss of faith in the system. This contributes to a breakdown of social harmony in a community.

In Vanuatu there are a series of external examinations at the end of year 6 (when students are 11–13 years), again at the end of year 10 (when students are 15–17 years), and then at the end of year 12 (students about 18–20 years). Failure at grade 6 and/or year 10 examinations, result in an inability to further proceed with schooling Some who pass and could proceed are unable to because of the costs.

Overwhelmingly, school practitioners described the current system of examinations at the year 6 level as a 'culling process' which tested mainly the literacy competencies of students. Teachers were aware of the drop out, or, 'push out' rate, of students and strongly commented on the anti-social impact this was having both on individual young people and on the nation as a whole.

School practitioners agreed with the findings of a review of several examination papers at both year 6 (General Knowledge) and year 10 (Social Science) levels by the research team. This review revealed that the questions were mostly directed at testing knowledge recall and the development of 'academic skills'. The high degree of literacy needed to enter the questions re-inforced the view of the examinations' emphasis on literacy skills.

One principal was highly-critical of the examination system for its impact in creating a hierarchy of subjects in the curriculum.

> *In the examination system, the creative kids in schools get lost, because they are not examined.*
> *(Luganville secondary school principal)*

A teacher at a secondary school on the island of Espiritu Santo commented about the impact of the examination system, particularly for year 6 primary school students:

> *I think many young people see themselves early in life as failures. Then they go through a stage of wanting to stay in towns, then they feel they should go back to their village, even though they have few relevant skills. This is not good for Vanuatu as a nation.*
> *(Espiritu Santo teacher of Social Studies,)*

In summary, stakeholders both from within the education sector and outside in the community, saw the current examination system as firstly, being socially divisive, and secondly, as being an impediment to important social learnings.

Physical conditions in schools

Physical conditions in schools vary hugely between schools. It was not always clear to researchers why physical conditions in some schools were so much better than in others. Sometimes the explanation given was that this had been a primary school before it became a Junior Secondary School (JSS). Sometimes it had been a church school (indeed that it still was), or it was the first, or perhaps the most recent, of its type in the province. A few schools seem simply to have been almost forgotten, and their physical conditions were of the most primitive and neglected (though not unloved) kind. Some were blessed with almost anything a school in the developed world would have had. Dramatic variations such as these do not contribute to a sense of social cohesion.

Resources in schools

Resourcing is not evenly achieved, neither by the Ministry of Education, nor by those organisations or institutions outside the country, which, for one reason or another, contribute resources to schools. No-one is so foolish as to reject these contributions, but they contribute additionally, to a strong sense of inequity from people who see resources being allocated in such a random manner. This sense of unfairness reduces the likelihood of schools collaborating in achieving social or cultural mixing goals.

Equipment such as tables and chairs or stools were generally provided, though not always by the Ministry of Education. Blackboards and other teaching equipment were generally of a most basic kind. Children cannot learn solely in their heads; re-inforcement requires writing, and basic writing tools were not always available to children for writing. Resourceful teachers kept their posters from one year to the next, and rationed the paper out to students. But the fundamental need to make mistakes and then be able to correct them requires paper to be more readily available than appears to often be the case. Another result of this card and paper shortage is that classrooms were rarely visually interesting, something which is important in increasing student motivation.

Many schools were able to assert they had enough copies of the curriculum books, but these were frequently very old, without covers *('they are not real books and they are not able to last'* bewailed one principal of a JSS). They were universally outraged that they would be expected in future to pay for such resources from the CDC. The Social Studies teachers, and their principals, were very frustrated that their students had no access to a range of optional texts, to enable a range of views to be considered in the teaching and learning, and to assist in the development of research skills. Access by all teachers to teacher guides, which should accompany curricula documents, was rarely asserted as possible. And obtaining further copies of such documentation was rarely deemed possible, not even worth the attempt.

The most strident criticism was retained for the out-of–datedness of the curriculum materials. *'They are an insult to our students'* said one very frustrated JSS teacher. Many teachers can remember most of them existing when they were students, and to meet them now after so long is to suggest the world has stood still, and *'that is not the case'* said another teacher, somewhat ruefully. Lack of certainty about which versions of the curriculum teachers and schools have in their possession makes for a very nervous teacher cohort, especially when they take seriously their task of preparing students for the years 6 and 10 exams. Not one practitioner confidently understood how the process of curriculum development occurred, and this means that attempting to access up-to-date versions of the curriculum takes on the feeling of a (very serious) mystery tour. Provincial Education Officers need this information so they can pass it onto teachers in their provinces.

The need to access materials appropriate to the study of current affairs had teachers commonly asking for newspapers (*'though of course they would have to be translated'* said one Social Studies teacher in a Francophone JSS). Internet access was frequently mentioned as an absolutely necessary alternative resource (and it was generally believed to be cheap, once the system is in place!). Whilst some schools struggle with an unreliable phone line, and experience considerable isolation, others have access to the internet and have computers in classrooms. More inequity, and *'this is not good Vanuatu culture'*, according to one principal.

A few schools had a library building but they were donor-built and a limited range of books existed in them. Generally books were lined around a classroom or sometimes in boxes on the principal's office floor. They are almost-universally old and western in content. These books are the rejects of western culture, often a culture which the researchers could recall from their own (and distant) childhoods. These books are generally donated, and schools keep them out of respect to the motives of those who sent them. But these books are not suitable materials for learning by anyone in the twenty-first century. They appear to be regarded by the schools as not relevant or useful to learning. Researchers at no time saw such books being used by students as a resource, and it is perhaps just as well, if these donations were the best they had to hand. Elite schools were readily-identifiable by the well resourced libraries they had, and by the students who were actually utilising them.

The co-curriculum or extra-curricular activities

The so-called 'co-curriculum', involving extra-curricula activities in sport; inter-school visits; cultural activities; language activities of various kinds, is a very fertile field for exploration and enactment of civic virtue and values. This area of school activity and operations were discussed in every school interview.

All schools, as part of the Physical Education syllabus have their pupils engage in two hours of organised Physical Education activity per week. In many schools a co-curricular flow-on from this curriculum is within school competition and in some schools, interschool competition. Additionally the students (more often the boys than the girls) engage in ball games in the break times. These activities connect to self-respect and to learning objectives in the field of health.

Another curriculum area which results in co-curricula activities is Agriculture (part of the Technology core Year 7–10 curriculum). Students, especially in residential JSS, grow much of their own food. So they also garden to ensure they eat well and have good health. They are encouraged to practise some of the traditional gardening competencies. Similar benefits flow from the other half of the Technology curriculum. Students study home economics/cooking, and the flow-ons of this are mostly eating activities: preparing food for visitors on open days, for parents and guardians on home weekends, for socials and other get-togethers with peers, and for the big cultural days at school. Ultimately the greatest benefit for the students and their society, is when students return home: *'they are useful, contributing members of their community'*, as one proud principal affirmed.

Parent participation in school communities

It appears there is little parent participation in most schools in Vanuatu. This is not to say there is a lack of interest, but for a range of reasons most parents are not actively involved in their childrens' education. They are more like witnesses to it. They are commonly invited to parent days at the end of terms where kastom and other activities are enacted by the students and are watched by parents. Some schools talked of plans they had for parents to take part in classroom activities, but this was very rare. It is, of course impossible for parents of most secondary students to travel the distances between home and the school. So most parents have to wait for the school to invite them to attend for a special occasion, or receive a report of their child's progress, or wait for the child to return in the school break. This is perforce the limit for many of them. Parents were involved by schools in student discipline, since school principals generally thought that it was parents' business when their children required disciplining.

But primary schools, especially in rural areas, are closer to their local community, and in such regions there were more examples of parents actually feeling as if they were part of the school community. Even so it was common to be told *'parents visit but are not part of the school'*.

Some schools sought parent assistance with constructing school buildings, but mostly the payment of the fees (not always in hard currency, but in kind) is the sole participation either sought or achieved by schools. Anxiety about the difficult of paying for the school fees was the uppermost concern for many parents, but they were prepared to make the necessary sacrifices though some were just not able to continue for the four years of secondary education. All secondary schools regretfully reported the departure of students whose parents could not continue to pay the fees, low though may be`.

More common though, especially in rural areas, was the view that parents were insufficiently part of the school community and they wished to be more involved. Proposed changes to policy on language instruction are seen as a response to parent insistence that there be greater parent involvement in their children's education. Ways of enabling greater involvement are not readily on most people's minds.

However there appears to be considerable faith within the parent community that schools are probably good for their children, and they trust they will do well in life as a result of attending them. For most parents formal schooling must be a relative enigma, and schools will need to actively encourage parents to engage, if they want greater participation to occur in classrooms.

The language of instruction

The Vanuatu Constitution states that:

> *The national language of the Republic is Bislama. The official languages are Bislama, English, and French. The principal languages of education are English and French.*

In many ways the Constitution gives a mixed message about how to view the relative values of the three languages of Vanuatu. Yet language is one of the most important symbols of identity and social cohesion, and the above quote, and recent policy decisions about the use of the vernacular reflect this new nation's engagement with establishing its national identity.

Not surprisingly, the issue of what is the appropriate language of instruction is enthusiastically debated. Many parents and teachers are wanting to value and maintain vernacular languages. This is a culturally-based position. The reverse positions include the usual reactions associated with the 'weakness' of a spoken language when in written form, as if spelling is the most important aspect of written language, or a heightened sense of the value of being able to speak a foreign language. Neither of these reverse positions recognises the symbolic and cultural significance of the vernacular(s).

Urban dwellers are inevitably more likely to be familiar with languages such as Bislama (the lingua franca) or English or French, rather than their home language, in which there is almost certainly no written reading or signage. Thus regional, equity and deep cultural principles are embedded in this issue. The issue drew a complex response from all practitioners, all of whom have a firm grasp on the cultural and values underpinning it. Almost universal is the belief that the vernacular should be the language of instruction in the early years of schooling. This would suggest that the Ministry policy of implementing language changes, via the trials planned for 2002, will be welcomed by whole school communities. Given that the policy also implies greater community involvement in the learning sites of young children, one can expect this also to be welcomed by Vanuatu parents. Details of these policies were provided in *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment.*

Time and again in schools researchers were told that students were forbidden from talking in Bislama, even though it was often the only language they could competently share with each other. Some were even forbidden from speaking Bislama in the school yard. Since the exams are in English and French, and to the extent that it requires considerable facility with one of these two languages, so the need for students' facility to improve is real. This is typical of the dilemmas associated with the language issue in Vanuatu. How much time is a young ni-Vanautu child in school learning foreign languages? And is this an appropriate use of their time, and of the country's slender resources?

The language of instruction issue is compounded by the dependency on foreign aid and the colonial inheritance. The dual system of the national and Francophone systems is being reduced by the recent requirement that all students sit Grade 6 and 10 exams with the same (albeit, translated) questions. However there are still serious separations between the two systems of schools, and these dislocations need to be addressed.

SECTION 6: SYLLABUS REVIEW: VANUATU

Introductory Comments

As was commented in *Report 1:Stakeholders' Assessment,* difficulties were experienced in collecting the syllabus documents. The documents reviewed do not constitute a complete set by any means, and this mirrors the situation in all the Vanuatu schools we visited, where none appeared to have a complete set. Some curriculum documents were read and reviewed, but have not been reported in detail with the others in Section 6 below.

Some of the curriculum documents which were read and reviewed, have not been reported in detail with the others in Section 3. Judgements about inclusion were made, generally supported by teacher opinion on the use they made of the material, as to the appropriateness of some syllabi to the social cohesion context. Those judged to not be clearly contextualised do not appear in the review.

One difficulty when reviewing syllabus and course materials, as was referenced earlier in Section 1 of this report, is how to determine the strength of the link between what stands ready to be developed in the document's content and what might become of such prompting in the classroom when the teacher enacts the materials. Classroom observation would need to be very extensive to enable generalisations to be made about links being manifested between syllabus documents and pedagogy. This project did not allow time for such classroom observation.

There is a need for the reader of this syllabus review to distinguish between teacher and student materials, for they are quite different in their content and objectives. One gains the impression that in many of the teachers' handbooks accompanying the syllabus prescriptions, the content is only designed to give teachers factual information (or access to it), in order to enable them to keep one step ahead of students in their knowledge acquisition. Suggestions for classroom treatments of any content included as information are rare indeed. Given the caveats mentioned earlier in relation to the limited range of pedagogies experienced by trainee teachers, both in their own schooling, and also in their training, the paucity of teaching strategies in the syllabi suggests that little by way of variation from the 'chalk and talk' style of teaching occurs in Vanuatu classrooms. Certainly the researchers saw little teaching at primary or secondary level which varied from this model.

The syllabus documents were analysed for their relevance to the knowledge and the issues which relate to social cohesion and tolerance. The syllabus review, which follows in this section, uses tables to map the content topics in the syllabi which have the potential to connect to such knowledge and issues. Prior's Citizenship Dimensions are again used to provide a locus for the interpretation of the substance of the materials. Section 4 of this report provides a detailed analysis by practitioners in Vanuatu schools of how they teach the curriculum, and this syllabus review and mapping serves as context for that operational assessment.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (2000). ***Prescription Document for Assessment towards Year 10 Certification.*** Port Vila.

Notes:

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Key areas	For each of the 4 years, there are the same 4 key areas which underly [sic] the topic coverage. There are: p.4 • knowledge and ideas; • skills and abilities; • values and attitudes; • social participation.	All: D1-D6
Main aim	***Through Social Science studies, students will have the ability to cooperate, and show concern and respect for others. Social science, more than any other subject gives students the opportunities to develop these skills and values, and to participate in social situations. (p.3)*** **Caveat:** *No single aim can satisfactorily describe the contribution of Social Science to a sound general education. (p.3)* Accordingly, this is supported by eleven more explicitly stated aims and the analysis which follows shows they are mirrored in specific instances in the prescribed curriculum. The aims are given below in ***bold italics***: the instances are sorted by Year level – "V8" for example means the activity or learning is to found in the detailed rubric for Year 8 students in the Vanuatu system.	D3-D6
Year 9 topics	• Living in Towns (almost entirely knowledge based, especially geographical) • Nations and Governments (solid section on government in V, p.41) • Learning to Live in Vanuatu (patterns of behaviour: changing customs; making social rules) • Working Together in Vanuatu (co-operation and competition – local)	D1, D3-D6
Year 10 topics	• Population Education (incl. pollution, ecology and other environmental issues) • Our Changing Society (a lot about resources, a lot of historical background) The widest range of suggested activities in the syllabus document occurs for Year 10, Topic 2, "Our Changing Society", but these largely call for explanations and descriptions (pp. 72–75).	D1, D3

Development of essential skills	***Social Science should enable students to participate in activities that develop skills in enquiry, planning, decision-making and problem solving;*** • village surveys V7 • primary sources V7 • oral history V7 • survival skills V8 • questionnaire surveys V8 • research topic for common assessment task, V10	D1, D3
Significant social issues	***Social Science should enable students to examine significant social issues;*** • matrilineal and patrilineal societies V7 • distribution of populations and resources V7 • supply and demand V8 • exploitation and conservation V8 • tourism study V8	D1, D3, D5
Development of social and historical perspective	***Social Science should enable students to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding about people, societies and environments, in various times and places;*** • seeing the school as a microcosm of national society V7 • custom, tradition, culture and society [inc. cultural centres and museums] V7 • custom stories V7 • comparisons with societies in other countries [e.g. V7 Indonesia; Trobriand Islands] • interactions between societies and environments V8	D1, D3, D5
Accent on the future of the society	***Social Science should enable students to explore what is possible and preferable in the future, both for their own lives and for society, and participate in actions which may contribute to more desirable futures;*** • awareness of changes in family life V7 • using natural resources wisely, especially through planning, and misusing V8	D5, D6
Accent on the future for oneself	***Social Science should enable students to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and values that will be necessary to meet the challenges of life in the twenty-first century.*** • work and occupational study V8 • "Spaceship Earth" V8	D2, D5

Values formation	***Social Science should enable students to develop and practise the values necessary for living in a democratic society and a sustainable world*** No activities or instances of process for this desired development could be found explicitly stated in the curriculum documents. However, presumably some teaching is expected because "Values" get a place in the assessment scheme – 50% of 30% internal assessment of Year 10 [p.65]. The "Values and Attitudes" (p.75) section focuses largely on learning about the world outside Vanuatu.	D1, D4-6
The self in the community	***Social Science should enable students to see themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals and community members, capable of making a positive contribution to society;*** • individual uniqueness within social and communal parameters V7 • defining nuclear and extended families V7 • similarities and differences between particular families V7 • happiness and unhappiness in family groupings V7	D2, D4-6
Lifelong learning	***Social Science should enable students to develop a positive and systematic approach toward being responsible for their own learning*** No activities or instances of process for this desired development could be found explicitly stated in the curriculum documents.	D2
Working with others	***Social Science should enable students to work, cooperate and communicate with others;*** • co-operative learning and group work V7 • study of occupations (especially rural) V8	D3
The nature of society	***Social Science should enable students to appreciate our society's multicultural and interdependent nature;*** • some recognition of different island cultures [e.g. an exercise in class representation] V7 • differences in custom, tradition, and culture from one island to another, and communally intra-island, are dealt with V7 • exploring feelings about the home country V7 • contrast of rural and urban cultures and societies V8	D1, D3
Society and its traditions	***Social Science should enable students to understand how our society has evolved and recognise that it continues to evolve;*** • time, the future, and their hopes for it V7 • customs and traditions changing over time V7	D1, D3

Department of Education, Vanuatu. (1993). ***Vanuatu Religious Education Syllabus: Vanuatu Programme de l'Education Religieuse.*** Port Vila.

Notes:
The following general aim from the Year 7–10 Social Science framework is to some extent supported in the Vanuatu Religious Education syllabus. The Year 10 prescribed course in particular adds something to the Social Science curricular treatment:
Social Science should enable students to see themselves as unique and worthwhile individuals and community members, capable of making a positive contribution to society.

Some suggestions from the four booklets of Teacher's Notes for Years 7 to 10 are included at the foot of the table, to indicate possible starting points for class discussions about the development of students in accordance with Christian principles (the Year 8 Notes are dated 1992 – others are undated).

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Key areas	• provide factual knowledge of the Bible; • develop practical Christian values; • help pupils relate religious teachings to their everyday life; • develop in the pupils a desire to communicate responsible social and moral attitude to others [sic].	D3 D4 D2, D4-6 D6
Vanuatu society	• general survey of the first missionaries; (V7) • good and bad results; (V7) • the Church in Vanuatu today.	D1
Year 7	• It is suggested that a *kastom* story relating to creation be used to introduce treatment of the book of Genesis. • Several lessons are devoted to consideration of the impact of missionaries on the traditional customs of the ni-Vanuatu.	D1 D2
Year 8	• A Term 3 segment on Growing Up focuses on physical, emotional and mental changes in individuals, and in relationships between people. • A later segment focuses on attitudes, offering Jesus's attitudes as a comparison.	D2, D4
Year 9	• Term 2 work is introduced by a topic called "My Responsibility for Myself". • This is developed by later topics called "My Responsibility to My Family" and "My Responsibility for My Community". Other topics dealt with are: • sex before marriage; • sharing; • persecution.	D2 D3 D2 D3 D4

Year 10	In Term 2, under the general heading "My responsibility to the World", four separate topics headings offer a chance to review leading issues within a religious framework: however, how these might be treated in class, beyond introductory conversations, is not made specific • Choosing a job; • World Poverty; • Prejudice; • Leadership (including the Qualities of a Good Leader).	 D2 D1, D5 D5 D1, D6

Vanuatu Department of Education. (1993). ***Vanuatu: Agriculture Syllabus: Programme de l'Agriculture.*** Port Vila.

Notes: Both the Aims below clearly have some relationship to Dimensions 1 and 3, but the detailed treatment in the syllabus does not indicate how the learning would be achieved.

Reference	***Comments***	***Six Dimensions***
Aim 1	[Having successfully completed the course, the student should] Understand the importance of Agriculture to the economy of Vanuatu, and to the lives of the ni-Vanuatu people.	D1, D3
Aim 3	[Having successfully completed the course, the student should] Appreciate the practical opportunities and limitations of traditional and commercial agricultural systems.	D1, D3

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1997). ***Our Communities: Social Science***. Port Vila.
Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1997). ***Our Environment: Basic Science***. Port Vila.

Notes:
At various times in the Vanuatu school students' experience of their school system, other curriculum documents prescribe supporting opportunities for learning within the orbit of Social Science education. For example, in primary school, learning outside the basic skills is set up as a General Studies course. This allows interactive curriculum treatment of Science and Social Science, and the course is set out in two main strands – *Our Communities* [OC] and *Our Environment* [OE]. Two other strands, *Our Needs* and *Religious Instruction* make up the whole complex curriculum offering.

Not all publications in this series were available: those that were consulted were:
Our Communities
Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6
Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6.
Student's Book for Year 1.
Teacher's Guide, Year 1.
Student's Book, Year 2.
Teacher's Guide, Year 2.
Our Environment
Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6

Reference	***Comments***	***Six Dimensions***
Main aims: Children's needs	• confidence; • success; • co-operation; • creativity; • concern; • independent learning ***Our Environment*** (pp. 28–32)	D2, D4
Teaching/ Learning strategies	The Teacher's Books for both courses are very strong on positive, active and child-centred activities as suggestions for enacting syllabuses: • active learning; • outdoor activities; • problem solving; • group work ***Our Environment*** (pp. 28–32) To these, the other handbook (***Our Communities***, *pp. 23–4*) adds: • investigations and surveys; • interactions; • brainstorming /role-playing. Both Teachers' Handbooks stress the need for integrated activities covering all or most of the four strands, and suggested they look further for integrated opportunities, to Arts and Physical education.	D2 D4 D1, D3 D3 D2

General objectives	These include (OC, Handbook, page 7): • develop an understanding of the past, present and future of the nation and Pacific region; • learn about the Vanuatu national government, it's democratic foundations, and become aware of their rights and duties as citizens; • learn about local government at the village, islands and towns levels; • understand, develop and protect the environment in which they live; • understand that Vanuatu is a nation based on Christian principles.	D1 D1, D3 D1, D3 D5, D6 D4
Topic summaries	In the General Studies Scope and Sequence (OC, Handbook, page 8) two major topics are common across year levels: • How Communities Work; • Our Roles and Responsibilities. Together with the topic lists provided at each grade level, these would make for a powerful classroom presentation of the issues and learning styles appropriate to Social Science.	D1, D3 D2-4; D6
Some specific units of work	• Me the Individual: I am special (V1); • Emotions and Change (V1); • Responsibilities with Friends (V1); • Village environment: topology; physical characteristics (V2); • Rules and responsibilities (V2); • Different people on our islands (V3); • Working together as citizens (V3); • The constitution and parliament of Vanuatu (V5) • Government and non-government organisations (V6).	D2 D2, D4 D4 D1, D3 D4, D6 D1, D3 D4, D6 D1 D1

Vanuatu Ministry of Education. (2000). ***Technology: Teacher's Guide.*** Trial version. Port Vila.
Vanuatu Ministry of Education. (2000). ***Technology: Student's Book.*** Trial version. Port Vila.

Notes:
The aim below is supported by the detail of the syllabus, in that suggestions for construction and decoration given in design briefs for various artefacts clearly lie within ethnic design traditions. However the same sample briefs encourage students to take their own paths and follow their own inspirations in constructing the actual brief they will follow in their classrooms. So one is in some difficulty, classroom by classroom (or even student by student) in determining whether working toward the finished product would develop Dimension 2 (personal identity) or Dimension 3 (community) or both.

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
An aim of the course (Years 7–10)	be encouraged to use locally available materials and to ***maintain ethnic and cultural skills*** [*emphasis added*] page 5	D2, D3

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (various dates). ***Social Science: Year 7***. Port Vila.

Notes: These comments are taken from an incomplete set of students and teachers materials:

- *Book 1: Starting Together*. Students' Book (1998) and Teachers' Guide (1991);
- *Book 2: Our Families*. Teachers' Guide (1991);
- *Book 3: Living in Communities*. Teachers' Guide (1992);
- *Book 4: Our Islands, Our People*. Teachers' Guide (1992);
- *Book 5: What is History*. Students' Book (1993) and Teachers' Guide (1991).

Reference	*Comments*	*Six Dimensions*
Book One	• Focus on school and meeting people, developing a sense of school community; • Some conceptual work on "What is Social Science?". • Some activities specified for pairs and groups.	D2, D3 D1 D3
Book Two	• Families and relationships; • Families and roles; • Different peoples, Different Customs (2 lessons only) • How is family life changing?	D2, D4 D4, D6 D1, D3 D1
Book Three	• Living in communities; • Village surveys; • Communities in other countries.	D3 D3 D3
Book Four	Strong geographical and statistical bias: little about 'people'	D1
Book Five	Emphasis on Vanuatu's past, with some exploration of *kastom*	D1, D3, D5

Summary Comments on the Syllabus Review

As was commented in the equivalent section of this report for the Solomon Islands, social tolerance starts with a knowledge and understanding the societies of others and ones own. The syllabuses are indicative of what needs to be known – and teachers were critical of the content, in terms of its minimal local content and the Euro-centredness of much of which is prescribed:

Additionally, in the materials in the syllabus review and in the curriculum which teachers spoke of in the interviews, there is little explicit examination of attitudes such as tolerance, or respect for and celebration of difference. Nor is there any suggestion of how such attitudes might be enacted on a daily basis, of what they might mean in practice. No mention is made of the difficulties we or others might have in reaching harmonious interactions and relationships.

Teachers who wanted to address social tolerance and related issues asserted they had to adapt what they had in the official documents, and the researchers support this position. As has been demonstrated, the syllabus provides little encouragement and the exams little incentive to address such issues or adopt teaching strategies which might allow a divergence of views to be expressed in classrooms.

In the syllabi and other documents, Social Science 'skills' loom large, particularly at the factual acquisition and basic interpretation levels. Some of these we have classified elsewhere as 'civic knowledge'. Communication finds a place, but hardly ever the higher-order skills of testing of hypotheses, evaluation, and demonstration of personal commitment to the values and attitudes (let alone the actions) which are crucial to tolerance, harmony and co-operation.

Where the aim of a school is to prepare children for life after school, global issues are not deemed to be as important as curriculum documents might aver. Some teachers and administrators are concerned with the development of students as citizens, but few in fact saw this as a central aim of the present school curriculum. Social issues were more likely to be treated (directly or indirectly) in Forms 4 and 5 than they were lower down the school. In part, this is a response to curriculum documents and their contents. Social Science has the potential to play a big role in this development. However Social Science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status this was not only because of examination-directed learning.

The documentation accessed during this review process was characterised by variations in structure and approach. These have been introduced as a result of the intermittent development of the syllabus over a number of years, by different persons, with different agendas. There is little sense of a sequential and incremental framework. As with the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills in any other area of learning, the enhancement of social tolerance and harmony needs a structured and developmental framework to be integral to the curriculum.

The syllabus review demonstrates that the mere writing of a syllabus cannot enable an observer or a participant to know what is being taught. Only the construction of a curriculum, where the pedagogy must be outlined and where it should be as much the focus of the document as the content, will enable teachers to know what are the desired learning outcomes, and how possibly she or he may reach them. In no area of human learning can this be more true than it is of values and attitudes learning. The next section of this report provides an opportunity to hear the voices of the ni-Vanuatu practitioners on matters associated with the actual operations of these curricula, in schools, and how these operations affect social cohesion, in the schools themselves, and in the broader society.

SECTION 7: ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS THROUGH THE SIX CIVIC DIMENSIONS: VANUATU

Evidence of student acquisition of the dimensions of citizenship in schools can come from a range of sources. The most obvious is the extent to which the dimensions appear explicitly in curriculum documents. Another source of data came from discussions with stakeholders in schools – principals, teachers and students. Observations by researchers during visits to schools were a valuable source, particularly in the area of the hidden curriculum and informal school practices.

Dimension 1 : Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge refers to those understandings about the civic processes in any community. This is not to imply that these processes will take exactly the same form in every community. For young people to contribute to, and participate in, decision-making processes, they need a well-developed understanding of the institutions involved and the actual democratic processes of engagement as they relate to the institutions and in their society. Examples of civic knowledge include:

- Understandings about the decision-making processes in the community, for example, the role of village chiefs, pressure groups, elections and government
- Knowledge about civic institutions, for example, courts, parliament, schools, village chiefs
- Understandings about the legal requirements and obligations of citizenship, for example, becoming a legal citizen, paying taxes, voting at elections
- Understandings about the historical and cultural contexts in which a community exists, for example, knowledge about different island cultures, use of vernacular languages

The analysis of the extent of emphasis given to the acquisition of civic knowledge in schools in Vanuatu resulted in the articulation of a number of dilemmas. Stakeholders in schools – principals, teachers and students – all believed that aspects of civic knowledge, in particular understandings about the diversity of traditional cultural practices and the workings of present day governments, were missing from the curriculum.

> *Teacher are complaining that there should be a lot more in the syllabus...*
> *(Efate, Social Studies teacher)*

This was the common view, too, of stakeholders out in the community (see Report1). The dilemma begins with the analysis of the national curriculum documents, for it is here that it becomes obvious that in several areas of the curriculum, aspects of civic knowledge are included (see above Section 6). In at least four areas of the curriculum – Social Studies, Religious Education, Technology (Trial Version) and Agriculture – knowledge of traditional cultural customs are part of the syllabus. The difficulty appears to lie partly in the focus the examinations give to the study of civic knowledge. One teacher perception was that:

> *The civic knowledge that is included in the examination is 'commercial' so kids lose their sense of traditions and history.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Social Studies teacher)*

An analysis of two recent examination papers supported this contention. The 1998 *General Paper* for Grade 6 students was comprised mostly of multiple choice and complete the sentence questions. The majority of questions asked for the recall of incidental and unconnected facts, with the biggest single focus being on "commercial" questions, like tourism. The 2000 *Social*

Science for Year 10 students had similar types of questions and of the two essay questions, one focused on 'Surviving in a Hot Desert'.

It was the observation of the researchers during visits to schools in three locations that there were several practical issues standing in the way to effectively teaching about the civic knowledge dimension of cultural tolerance. In several schools, teachers did not have a complete set of curriculum materials. Discussions with teachers in several schools revealed a lack of understanding about appropriate pedagogies, for example, co-operative learning, to promote social learning. There were noticeable exceptions, however, where a very enthusiastic teacher engaged the students in participatory activities, almost in spite of the requirements of the curriculum and the examinations.

> *I incorporate citizenship elements into my classes. For example, I use group work. I discuss social issues and traditions but all of these are incidental to the curriculum.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Primary school teacher)*

Current affairs appeared to be included in classroom operations on rare occasions, although teachers often referred to the lack of newspapers and radio in their schools as major factors preventing them from incorporating a more relevant approach to their teaching.

With some noticeable exceptions, schools appeared to be almost totally divorced from their local communities. In the case of secondary boarding schools, their physical location often at a remote site well away from villages, produced a cloistered atmosphere where teaching and learning was not part of the real world. There are, of course, historical reasons for the siting of the more long established secondary schools, but it is hoped the plan to establish community schools, in or near villages, will go ahead. Communities have a lot to offer schools in the maintenance of cultural traditions and in the enhancement of social harmony.

There is now clear evidence of the strength of feeling in villages for schools to be part of the community in the desire to reintroduce vernacular languages as the medium of instruction. One of the real challenges for the education bureaucracy in this desire will be the placement of teachers in schools who can speak the local vernacular.

The achievement of social harmony and cultural tolerance in needs to be grounded in mutual understandings about and respect for difference. The impression gained from this dimension of citizenship within schools in Vanuatu is that schools, as an organisation, rarely had a whole school plan to approach student understandings about the knowledge component of social tolerance. Teacher knowledge was often deemed to be inadequate both in terms of the key concepts of social tolerance and in terms of understandings about appropriate pedagogies. Resources about social tolerance from the Curriculum Development Centre were also seen by teachers as being inadequate in both the quality of production and out of date materials. Key policy-maker stakeholders within the Ministry of Education could point towards some new policy initiatives derived from the Education Master Plan (October 1999), within the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP). In an attempt to respond to demands for an enhancement of civic pride, new education policy initiatives include vernacular teaching for junior years, and the establishment of community schools. These have been policy for some time now, implementation of them being particularly slow, to almost-universal frustration.

Dimension 2 : A Sense of Personal Identity

The psychological theories of the development of positive personal identity, or a feeling of self-worth, are well grounded in the belief that the level of an individual's self-esteem is critical to that person being able to, or wanting to, relate or bond with another person or group. A willingness to empathise with, and be tolerant of, other diverse cultural groups or individuals is predicated on a sense of self worth and personal well being. Examples of a positive sense of

personal identity include having a feeling of personal security and belonging, recognising the origins of one's values and beliefs and feeling efficacious.

Teacher stakeholders often commented on the lack of topics in the current curriculum with a focus on personal well-being. They supported the view that young people are unlikely to have feelings of mutual obligations and social cohesion if they are not given the opportunities in school to explore their own identity(s). Invariably the power of the external examination was the factor most cited as removing this aspect of education from the curriculum. If it was not to be examined then it was not important, was the common view. A stakeholder at the examination centre conceded this point. *'We are only teaching children to pass the exam. We are not teaching kids about the social world'.*

There is a fundamental weakness in this curriculum-based approach to teaching, in that it ignores the degree of self-respect that derives from belonging to a group, being supported by that group, especially by its key members. Few teachers seemed to believe they could create such a group for their students. But some schools do create a sense of family, of belonging.

> *Our students are happy because of the love and care given by the staff; they feel safe*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal.)*

The possibilities open to schools to create a community are legion, especially when they are boarding schools, where the students have to learn *and* live together, and where the students must feel quite lost, unable to be with blood family for months at a time. Some school administrators commented that students turn inwards for a while, and the level of school interest in group cohesion is indicated by the policies adopted by schools at this point. One school's approach to its approximately one hundred new Year 7 students each year was simply to:

> *... leave them to it for a couple of weeks... they soon find out there are some distant family connections who they can rely on to help them when the road gets rough.*
> *(Efate Secondary College Deputy Principal).*

By contrast other schools found that assisting in bonding of students could best be done by actively building on their old identities, nurturing those identities, giving them group tasks, and by setting group goals. In the Tanna school, from which the following quotes derive, the agriculture course was compulsory for every boy and girl and it had become a social activity (not unlike the norm for the ni-Vanuatu villager). To celebrate the Year of Native Food, the students, in their regional groups, had been expected to set the gardens up *('the teachers were instructed to not be too helpful, unless it became necessary')* and by turning gardening into a co-operative venture with the 'edge' of a prize (as yet unknown) being offered to the regional group which creates the most productive plot (criteria not disclosed!), student engagement was at a peak.

> *We find they want to be in their gardens all the time, they are working longer and more together. The teachers in charge will measure the crops, and the children are excited to learn how it is done. The food they grow is very good for us And it keeps them busy on weekends.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)*

On the strength of this experience, the principal decided to address some gender and other social issues, by having the children construct their own 'bush kitchens', again in regional and gender-mixed groups. The groups decided on location and construction. The girls did not let the boys decide everything, and *'the responsible teachers supervised from a distance'.* The students used their local skills and knowledge, and are intensely proud of the kitchens, in which, on rosters of their own devising, they cook and eat their weekend meals. The principal's goals with this exercise were:

> *To give the students opportunity to do things on their own, to be creative and be responsible for the success of their own hut. They need practice to negotiate. They have already learned how to co-operate and negotiate from their parent, but they must learn to make decisions for themselves. They have to devise rotations to ensure the houses continue, like the community.*

(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)

This school was led by a principal who was only recently appointed and the school had dramatically changed in his first few months. So these are the kinds of changes any school can make and the students benefit. They are so happy at this school that,

> *...they don't want to go home on off weekends! And their parents and guardians have said they are different, more confident people now.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal)*

The Physical Education syllabus (a non-examined course) was consciously used in this school to help students become responsible for their own bodies and health

> *It is important for their self-respect that students be strong for their lives and for work, it helps them find jobs and it helps them relax in class.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School deputy principal)*

This school also had a Student Council, like many in Vanuatu. However unlike those schools which deployed their prefects as the police in their school community, this group, composed of all eight prefects, all elected by the whole student body, had direct access to the principal. Their task, with the two teachers who were on the Council, was to

> *Tell the principal about student ideas on anything,, to have student concerns aired and resolved, to be organised in their meetings and responsible in their goals, to seek equity. They help us* ***such*** *a lot.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal and deputy principal)*

These teachers understood the urgency of a curriculum which will support student identity, and they could list a range of gaps in the curriculum, which they believed were essential if personal identity and social coherence were to be developed.

> *There needs to be a basic history of Vanuatu, a good amount of the geography of Vanuatu (both physical and cultural), need a concept of change to be introduced through the curriculum. Current affairs needs to be current and some of it needs to be Ni-Vanauatu. We need marketing practice, population shifts, so they can understand why the local storehouse has fallen down. And we should have local text books, or at least regional examples in all the books. Our students need to* ***know*** *our diversity, not just be told about it. These are the essentials for personal self-respect and success.*
> *(Tanna Junior Secondary School principal and deputy principal)*

Researchers found no other secondary school where the explicitness of the personal curriculum was as clearly articulated and as broadly-implemented as it was in this school.

Primary schools have different issues and the alienation experienced by the language of instruction being a foreign one makes for a huge impediment to self-knowledge and a strong sense of identity. Teachers are keenly awaiting the introduction of vernacular teaching, and some are already able to speak the dialects of their students. '*It was not so hard!*' they say.

One small rural school had a teacher who believed her students could learn about their identity through the environment they inhabited ('*here and at home*' she said.) By personalising the environment, and the childrens' relationship with it, in this poem, she shows a considerable sensitivity to personal identity, and how it can be developed. It is teaching respect for all.

Mother Bush
Oh Mother Bush
How green and beautiful you are
You provide me with what I need
Food, Water and Shelter
What do I do in return for your kindness?
Destroy You!
How can you forgive me?
Oh Mother Bush.
(Tanna Grade 3 teacher)

This poem was part of a course the teacher had devised on the environment, and now it was a mobile swinging from the classroom ceiling. She said the children would occasionally ask again if they could say it together in class. '*It reminds them of who they are*' she explained.

This is the kind of pedagogy which can turn any topic, even one in a poorly structured and less than exciting course, into a meaningful personal learning experience. It starts with the attitudes of the teacher. Her children (as she called them) also did well in the exam, she assured the researcher. Her classroom (which had only two broken tables for the students) was strewn with student work, of which they were inordinately proud. She was not a local woman, and two of her children were attending the school. She had been a teacher for some ten years.

Children have to want to be at school before they will learn well, and those schools which make efforts to ensure their students belong at their school are those who best address the bigger issues of course appropriateness, and can find solutions to inadequate curriculum. There is no room for curriculum electives in Vanuatu schools as courses are compulsory, though emphases can vary from school to school. Thus this avenue of catering to individual identities and strengths is not available to students in most schools.

Dimension 3 : A Sense of Community

People generally live in communities and generally undertake some form of interaction with that community. This social behaviour of belonging is rarely simple, as a complex set of rules and customs determine membership to a community. In some cultures, the family, the village, the clan, for example, became the belonging unit to which members had both rights and obligations. These rights and obligations may have been both formal, like the obligation to defend the community in times of war, or informal, like an expectation to marry within the community.

One of the major complexities and contestables now facing communities in the twenty-first century is that the sense of locating oneself in a community has undergone profound changes. Vanuatu has not escaped these recent global pressures on where people might locate themselves. The sense of region is strong, and generally associated with pride in belonging to a particular group. A sense of community is rarely static and persons can locate themselves in a number of communities. So locations are not mutually exclusive. The sense of region combines with belonging to school and nation. In some, small rural communities the space between the students and their families' cultures is small, but in the urban areas, as was seen in *Report 1 Stakeholders' Assessment*, the spaces are so large that students never re-make the connections with traditional culture. And once they are out of the local, family culture they never fit back in again. This social dislocation can be lessened by policy changes.

The promotion of social cohesion as central to a sense of belonging to a community was invariably seen by adult stakeholders as a key element for any curriculum renewal. It was generally agreed, especially by Social Studies' teachers, that this was the case most particularly in Social Studies, and thus curriculum renewal was most urgent in Social Studies. One principal in

a Francophone school was fully aware of the tensions and disparity between what should be done and what currently is included in the curriculum.

> *Social Studies itself is good. But we have copied western society and somehow we don't know what we are doing.... Traditions, values, customs, arts, community ...this school doesn't support these... We follow only the syllabus.*
> *(Espiritu Santo secondary school principal)*

Schooling in Vanuatu, with its national curriculum, is one of the few shared and common experiences for most young people. Stakeholders were overwhelming in their belief that current school practices do not enhance social harmony because they usually ignore incorporating common national symbols. Principals reported that their school rarely flew the Vanuatu flag. Some principals commented that their school did not have a flag. Only in a minority of Santo schools was the national anthem sung by children outside of a few ceremonial occasions. In Tanna the flag was raised by selected students and flown at each school assembly, generally weekly. However this information was generally offered by principals with a knowing smile. (*'Its no big deal'* one said.) The researcher could only wonder what message was actually being delivered to students, if the principal's attitude to the ceremony was one of ambivalence. Research indicates that one element in the enhancement of social harmony, community and citizenship is the regular exposure to, and practice of, symbolic national icons, but only if they are seen as symbols of pride in the nation.

One school had had a competition amongst its students to design a school flag, which is flown frequently. *'They prefer it (to the national flag) because they think of it as theirs'* staff remarked.

The local community is rarely included in the school community in Vanuatu, and as we have seen there are also impediments to a family actively joining in their children's school life. The new policy of community schools is anticipated as a way to engage parents in schools. Few schools use parents as a resource, in the manner this small rural school did. In this school parents had a serious role in the teaching of parts of the curriculum. The personification of a functioning culture was the approach here.

> *We think of them as our culture in person, our history in person, the future we still want to have.*
> *(Tanna, primary school principal.)*

A sense of continuity is one of the great blessings belonging to a community can bestow on a people. But the links have to be established, and schools can work to forge links between their students' locales, or they can allow them to atrophy. For social coherence to be supported, the links need to be forged. The culture or talent nights most schools hold are a good example of how links between the parents and students can be forged. But they are also examples of how isolated an experience it can be. This is the community at a distance.

Dimension 4 : Adoption of a Code of Civil Behaviours

Members of communities of all types operate within a code of behaviours which collectively form the values and customs and traditions of the community. Communities generally have ways and means of initiating new members into the community (and of excluding them), maintaining the code of behaviours and, if necessary, adjusting them to changing conditions and environments. The term a 'civil society' describes those communities in which some form of cohering, peaceful and harmonious consensual agreement has been reached by the members, in order to maintain the code of behaviours. The symbols, ceremonies and other activities which illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin codes of behaviours, may vary from community to community, but single communities need to come to some form of agreement among its members about codes of behaviour in order to maintain social harmony.

Civil societies embrace codes of civil behaviours which support community values and traditions. Schools can play a critical role in laying the foundations for young people of the codes of behaviour expected in an adult civil society. Values like tolerance and social justice carry with them appropriate ways of behaving which enact the values. Schools can support positive civil behaviours in a number of ways. In a formal sense the curriculum can include topics and issues about a 'civil society'. Schools can adopt rules and activities which promote civil behaviours. And on the level of the hidden curriculum teachers can model, consciously or not, certain behaviours which it is hoped young people will emulate outside of school.

Under Dimension 1 the role of religious education as a form of civic knowledge was discussed. In the religious education curriculum it was noted how aspects of moral and ethical behaviour were formally promoted as a basis for life long action. Apart from this curriculum aspect of approaching teaching and learning about appropriate civil behaviours, there appears to be little other evidence of formal approaches embedded in the curriculum.

Schools are strictly hierarchical institutions. This characteristic can be overbearing or it can be slight. But in Vanuatu it is always there. The relationship of the school to the ministry is also of this ilk. Students know they are under the control of the adults, and when they are unhappy, hungry, lonely, and in a place they cannot see the sense of, doing courses they don't see the relevance of, discipline must be a dark area of schooling. And so it is by all accounts. Discipline is the word researchers meet when school principals are asked about codes of behaviours.

> *The culture and religion, through religious teaching tell students about the true law, about the discipline and the rules. We have the rules written down for students, and the children all know what they should do. They are also told what the rules are for: 'to make the community work'.*
> *(Tanna, Junior Secondary School principal)*

This was not an overbearing school and the process of disciplining students who had broken rules was consistent with the regime elsewhere. Punishment occurs, and to establish what punishment is difficult. In all schools researchers were made to understand it is a private matter. Former teachers, international teachers, teacher trainers and parents all tell stories of ritualised, humiliating physical punishment which is said to be routine in schools. So what causes this reluctance of practitioners to discuss punishment policy in schools? Is it because physical punishment has been expressly forbidden by the education ministry, and thus it is shameful that it continues? The culture of denial is palpable, and it was embarrassing to all parties in the interview each time it arose.

Parents are called in when things get out of hand, such as pregnancy, '*when the girl was expelled*'. Parent involvement was especially necessary as this girl had been promised to a man in another village. '*This is a problem for our disrupted culture*', said the principal. But, he said, bullying '*does not happen*', and when someone was accused of it, *'a note was sent home to his parents and they talked to him and it stopped'*. Such a set of responses does not suggest a pro-active approach to discipline. The school would say it does not need to be proactive, but one wonders. Overall it certainly does not suggest a culture in which children are encouraged to resolve their differences by addressing the problem together. The strict hierarchy of decision-making does not allow students much space to argue their case. They are expected to realise adults are right, and the student role is to show respect and obey. The authority of the Old Testament, in the religion syllabus is indicative of this view of Christianity.

One teacher suggested to the researcher in a follow-up letter.

> *I think it would be good to create a special 'book for conduct' etc, a special programme for school in the form of workshops.*
> *(Tanna Social Studies international teacher)*

Some teachers reported they did in fact engage students in teaching and learning activities like role plays, group work and student presentations. These teachers clearly demonstrated their energy and enthusiasm for enquiry-based learning in their classrooms. Yet even they acknowledged the generalisation that most teachers from their observation, generally adopted a 'chalk and talk' approach to teaching (and of course it is in a foreign language).

> *The normal pedagogy is textbook, read from by teacher to class, notes on board, copies by kids into notebooks. These are the answers to the exam questions. This is what everyone (ie teachers) knows and understands as pedagogy. Change to this is almost impossible. New teachers are quite different, and much better.*
> *(Tanna Social Studies international teacher)*

The reason given by most teachers for them adopting this pedagogy was the impact of the external examinations which largely demands recall of knowledge, and that made activities which took longer class time a distraction to the preparation for the examinations. But others reminded the researchers that: *'Vanuatu people are prepared to be told, they don't want to argue.'*

Modelling by teachers is crucial to the students learning about the culture of social tolerance and cohesion. Where teachers have encouraged students to practice democratic decision making there does not appear to be dramatic increase in the discipline incidents, so some relief should be felt if a school were to attempt a different approach to discipline. But modelling of a collegial sharing or the working in professional groups is most rare. (This comment refers to secondary teachers.)

> *Teachers are not brought together – ever! – to canvass professional praxis or to resolve difficulties.*
> *(Tanna JSS principal)*

Working together is also unusual for most school administrators. *'It's a jungle out there'* reported one new principal. *'No-one helps the new kid on the block; she might steal your staff!'*

Teachers need leadership to work together in schools, and in some exemplary schools it was said to be happening. But when asked about team teaching, or the sharing of lesson plans, the response was negative. Ownership of one's teaching resources and ideas is strongly felt. Comments have previously been made, in *Contextual Comments to the Curriculum Analysis,* about the 'best practice' observed in Tanna, in which the role of the Provincial Education Officer was fundamental. Modelling by PEOs by bringing teachers together to work in groups may enable them to share (and co-incidentally, increase their confidence in the advantages of group work as a pedagogy).

Principals and teachers often reported that schools should, and did, give students opportunities to demonstrate a range of civil behaviours which would enhance social tolerance and mutual understanding. Generally the examples given included the system of student leadership positions in schools. As was reported in an earlier section, it was the observation of the research team that these positions – prefects, class captains, work captains, sport captains – while usually student elected, gave opportunities for only a minority of students to learn and practice leadership behaviours. It was also believed that the opportunities for students to active engage and participate in significant decision-making processes in schools was extremely limited. As a generalisation students rarely had opportunities in classes to practice the behaviours of active citizenship. Outside the classroom, while some schools offered a wide range of student initiated extra-curricular activities, the general pattern reported by teachers and principals was one of a very passive, but none-too-contented student cohort.

Dimension 5 : An Informed and Empathetic Response to Social Issues

As much as we might like to think that many communities operate as socially harmonious units, twenty-first century pressures emanating from individuals, groups and global forces, invariably impact on the daily practices and values of communities. These pressures, and the varied impacts they cause, simply cannot be ignored in a society already under considerable tension. Most communities engage in making some form of accommodations and adjustments to these pressures and issues. One of the tensions for communities and their education systems is the extent to which information and understandings about contentious social issues can be discussed within the communities. Even acknowledgment of the existence of issues such as AIDS, gender discrimination, teenage pregnancies, youth ennui and poverty immobilises some communities. An effective democratic community is one that encourages discussions about contentious social issues and addresses them using inputs from the community. Social cohesion will not be achieved in an environment of ignorance, prejudice and complacency. Wan Smolbag, as was reported in *Report 1: Stakeholders' Assessment*, was particularly critical of the paucity of the curriculum in this area. They conduct workshops for many Grade 6 classes in sex education,

> *Because no-one else will teach them about it, Its all too embarrassing, so these kids get pregnant and contract AIDS without even being allowed to know it is possible and serious. (Director Wan Smolbag)*

A sense of citizenship requires both an informed understanding of social issues and also a sensitive and empathetic response to the issues. The disposition towards social tolerance and mutual understandings cannot be fully developed with just an emotional response. It requires both a cognitive response and an attitudinal response.

In the current context of a national curriculum which focuses on the recall of unproblematic aspects of knowledge and the development of a limited range of cognitive skills, there was little evidence of students actively engaging in discussions about social issues. Observations of school and classroom activities indicated that students were mostly uninformed about current social, political and economic issues and therefore were unlikely to form an empathetic disposition towards issues outside of their experience or knowledge. To some extent this situation reflects a particular philosophical approach to teaching and learning and is embedded in discussions about what's worth knowing.

It is the view of the researchers that the assumptions and values underpinning the current curriculum model, whether they be consciously held or not, reflect a transmission, rather than a transformative, model of education. For the most part the examination system re-enforces this approach to learning by posing questions which require little more than memory recall. It has been mentioned in other places in this report how the examination could be used as a means to give a different focus to teaching and learning.

It was the impression of the researchers that teaching and learning about social issues rarely occurs in primary schools in Vanuatu. It was here that the overwhelming emphasis in the curriculum was on developing literacy skills and the most common form of teaching was rote learning. It is unclear from discussions with principals and teachers that they believed students were too young to engage in meaningful learning about social issues, and/or if the grade 6 examination so dominated the curriculum and the pedagogy right down to the earliest years of schooling.

One teacher had a number of pragmatic reasons:

> *Our syllabus is so full, that we cannot fit in anything else. I can't think of any social issues I could discuss with my children. They are not used to discussions anyway... (Luganville, primary school teacher)*

It was a rare school in which teachers actively engaged their students in relevant (to them) social issues. Usually this happened in those schools which had a group of socially active teachers who regularly shared ideas about teaching and learning. Again this usually occurred in just a very small number of 'privileged' secondary schools in Vila.

> *We get our students to visit Parliament to see how decisions are really made and how our politicians behave. We then have elections in Year 9.*
> *(Port Vila, secondary Social Studies teacher)*

The space given in curriculum documents, in particular in the *Prescription Document for Assessment towards Year 10 Certification (2000)* for the investigation of current social issues is considerable. At the time of writing this report, few teachers had knowledge of this document and in discussions, most teachers were confused by the rhetoric of promoting current social issues which focused on 'future possibilities' and the realities of the types of knowledge recall questions traditionally asked in the year 10 examination.

On visits to several schools, the researchers were very impressed with the ability, and the willingness, of the principal to articulate the teaching and learning culture of the school. These principals argued the both teachers and students contributed to what might be called passive learning in classrooms where it was rare to move beyond the prescriptions of the syllabus. One principal had personally taken the lead in formulating a mission statement for his school, complete with a well developed philosophy and a set of specific objectives.

> *One of our objectives already in the school policy is to develop a good active citizen in a Melanesian Christian society.*
> *(Luganville, Principal, secondary school)*

This principal went to explain how the students at his school had actually gone on strike in response to his expectations that they should devote some of their out of school time to considering local social issues, like keeping the local river clean from pollution.

Other principals referred to the impact of traditional cultural practices on student classroom behaviour.

> *Students are not active talkers, teachers have to engage them. Ni-Vanuatu are quiet, they respect others, and this can be a barrier to communications in classes about discussing social issues. For many of my teachers, too, having a open discussion can be threatening to how they see themselves as teachers.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Principal, Secondary school)*

It is the view of the researchers that culturally appropriate social issues should be included in the curriculum. A willingness to respond positively to cultural diversity and to engage in some form of social action are hallmarks of citizenship education. The decision about which issues is clearly one for educational policy makers in Vanuatu. It is the observation of the researchers however that issues like conflict resolution, conservation of cultural heritage, drug use, AIDS, and environmental awareness, are worthy of consideration. The social studies curriculum appears to be the most obvious key learning area for the inclusion of social issues. It is in this area that the rhetoric of skill development espoused in the current curriculum documents could be applied to the investigation of social issues.

Dimension 6 : A Disposition to take Social Action

Asking the question, 'What do you think education should be for?' is a provocative question in a discussion about the purposes of schools. The role of citizenship education in the school curriculum is like this big question in that it makes no sense at all if it lacks a purpose, or a practical application. Like the goals of education, the goals of citizenship are both contestable and problematic. An agreed vision of the world in which you hope young people might live

happily and productively is needed, in order to give definition to conceptualising citizenship. It is a values clarification exercise, linking visions of the good life to the role education can play as an instrument of change.

Formal schooling is but one stage in learning, so to confine citizenship learning to the classroom divorced from the realities of the real world is largely a waste of time. There is little point in being a classroom citizen', because only a few people benefit from your actions. The bottom line for any effective social education programme is that students actually have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skills and values which they willingly and purposefully offer to the broader community. In other words they become active contributors to their community. A 'good' citizen is one who does pick up rubbish in the community, who does vote, who actively engages in community affairs. In other words they take some form of action. Some examples of how social action might be demonstrated by young people in schools include becoming actively engaged in community service or writing to newspapers about social issues.

There is now a large body of evidence that indicates that taking action mostly doesn't come naturally. (Knight,1999) School is an appropriate place in which young people can learn to take action. For young people, to develop a positive disposition to contribute to their community, they need to practice taking action, facing the consequences, and becoming contributing independent members of the school community. Schools need to develop structures and practices which allow young people to practice citizenship. When young people do not have experiences in showing initiatives and taking action, they lack a repertoire of appropriate actions from which to choose.

In this study fieldwork observations of schools in three provinces in Vanuatu indicated that principals and teachers supported strategies which actively promoted social tolerance. These stakeholders wanted their students to be independent learners, to show initiative in their own learning and to volunteer for types of community service around the school. However principals rarely set in place school structures and practices which would allow this to happen. Mostly students who did engage in some form of 'community-based' activities, for example, clearing the school grounds, were doing so because it was either punishment or it was seen by school administrators as a form of no-cost labour to the school. Rarely was this type of activity conceptualised broadly as practising community service and developing positive dispositions for later adult life.

One principal at an outer island Junior Secondary School commented that while he supported the view that schools have an important role to play in developing future community leaders, the opportunities for practice at his school were limited.

> *I know what you mean. It helps democratic processes. I would like students to be more active in some of our school activities and ceremonies. But what can we do here? We can't even appoint flag monitors. We have no flag or flagpole.*
> *(Espiritu Santo, Principal, Junior Secondary School)*

When it was suggested that students might initiate an activity like writing to the local chief to visit the school, as an example of student-led social action, this was received as a most innovative idea.

One principal, had a well-articulated view about the value of young people having opportunities to be active contributors to their communities.

> *Boys and girls need to have basic life skills and these are not part of their junior secondary curriculum, and they should be. In my school, with our students, the guardians and others who give jobs to our students, say how resourceful, responsible, skilled and helpful they are. We receive comments about how they are contributors. Our school agenda is to teach skills, attitudes and values. We are proud that our students have learned these things.*
> *(Principal, Junior Secondary School, Tanna)*

It has been mentioned earlier in this report that teachers and principals sometimes explained the passivity of students as being derived from the cultural norms of showing respect for elders and those in authority. Discussions with students outside of the school environment however, revealed some interesting insights into how they believed schools were not giving them opportunities for engaging in meaningful activities. In particular, boys, in these discussions, saw school as something to be endured.

> *At school we never went into town. I would have liked to try working with my brother at his repair shop and maybe even helping other members of my family around the town. I could have done this at the same time as being at school.*
> *(Discussion with a group of school leavers, in central park in Luganville)*

The location of most secondary boarding schools in Vanuatu some distance out of towns and villages has resulted in these schools being outside of the mainstream urban activities. In some instances this could be regarded as a good situation. The other argument is that students have minimal opportunities to interact with the community. Students are sent 'away' to boarding schools. It is in village primary schools where habits of community interaction can be fostered. Teachers and schools do not appear see the local community as a major resource in which young people can learn both a huge range of social skills and positive values about how they might contribute to harmonious relations in their village.

Summary Comments on the Operational Assessment by Practitioners

The visits to a wide range of schools in three locations revealed that principals, in their attitudes and approach to the role schools can play in promoting social learning, rarely had a whole school plan. Rather they agreed to the role school can play in the social development of young people, but mostly this was incidental to other purposes, like assisting students to pass the examinations. Principals have recently been asked by the Ministry of Education to develop individual school mission statements and school administrative handbooks. While a small minority of principals have done this, it has been outside of the national picture. Most principals appeared to be struggling to develop schools goals let alone think of the place of social development in this schema.

Most teachers and administrators in Vanuatu are concerned with the development of students as citizens, but few in fact saw this as a central aim of the present school curriculum. Social issues were more likely to be treated (directly or indirectly) in Forms 4 and 5 than they were lower down the school. In part, this is a response to curriculum documents and their contents. Many practitioners were very inclined to criticise the curriculum as preventing greater attention being given to social issues. Whereas the few teachers who were comfortable with discussion pedagogies, or who wanted their students to have detailed understanding of the concepts underpinning elections, for example, had no difficulty in using the Social Studies syllabus as a source of affirmation of their approach. However at present most Social Science teachers, especially secondary, sometimes felt marginalised by the prevailing attitudes in schools, and felt their subject to have reduced status. This is generally because Social Studies is not seen as contributing directly to a student's employment prospects.

Discussions about the kinds of skills all students need for their future lives has the potential to enhances the role of Social Studies in schools, but teachers and principals in particular need to be able to see a range of ways in which these skills can be delivered to students. An emerging interest in the generic competencies might be a foreshadowing of the re-emergence of Social Studies. Social Studies has the potential to play a big role in the curricular and pedagogoic development that relates to a emphasising of the social domain, with its emphasis on evidence, hypothesising, working together in groups, the power of values and empathy, a sensitivity to a range of ways of problem-solving, etc.

Teachers supported curriculum renewal especially in social education. A key issue for them in promoting social harmony was the total lack of teaching and learning materials about the cultural diversities of each of the provinces in Vanuatu. The argument was often made by teachers that students often lacked a detailed understanding of their own island culture and that teachers who taught in provinces not of their own background, also lacked knowledge and teaching materials about the cultural practices of their school community.

Teacher stakeholders were particularly critical of the lack of local cultural material in the curriculum and the lack of teaching and learning resources available about the cultures from other provinces. The teachers were not surprised at their students' lack of interest in the cultures of other provinces given students had not been encouraged to learn about their own personal cultural customs and practices. Frequently teachers were not able to provide any detail, and this lack of knowledge indicates a low level of interest, which will need addressing.

The culture in the school had a major impact on the capacity, and preparedness, of staff to step outside the models of 'real knowledge' as defined by the examination questions or by a minimalist reading of the syllabi. Whilst most practitioners professed great interest in the issues of social coherence and the future of the nation, they did not allow it to impinge on their practices.

Schools were generally very undemocratically organised, with most students having little chance to develop or practice empathy or leadership, except of the most moribund nature. Having to be in charge of things (silence in the classroom) or for the disciplining of others is not, is not sufficiently akin to being responsible for oneself, to be a useful learning. Schools which have boarders are able to create communities which are vibrant and self-managing, and there are very few of those.

SECTION 8: CONCLUSIONS

The major conclusions to be drawn from this operational assessment of school practices regarding cultural understanding, democratic participation and social cohesion can be applied to both the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. It has been stated earlier that the approach to this project was not as a comparative study, but more a case study approach. To that extent what follows is not comparative, but more in the realm of commonalities. The researchers are very conscious of the extent of differences between the two countries and the diversity within each country.

The focus of Report 2 has been the extent of nexus between the rhetoric of education policy, especially in curriculum documents, and the realities of school and classroom practices in the area of social learning.

It has been argued that teaching and learning involves all of the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills and the formation of values. It is the view of the researchers that in both countries the issue of what's worth knowing (knowledge) is undergoing considerable debate both in schools and in the broader community. This study revealed that the current curriculum policy is seen by most practitioners in schools in both countries as being out of date, lacking local cultural knowledge, and, in the area of social learning, mostly irrelevant to young people. The application of Prior's six dimensions of citizenship revealed that no key learning area in the curriculum and no school explicitly addresses all dimensions. In some schools, the principal and teachers had devised activities and revised areas of the curriculum to achieve a specific element of citizenship. There were very few of these schools in either country, but it was the view of the researchers was that, once identified, the ministry of education should publicise these case studies as being best practice.

There is a severe slippage between the expectations of curriculum policy makers and the expectations of teachers (and parents). This may be a somewhat unfair comment on the curriculum writers, for the reality is, in both countries, there are currently no social education curriculum writers. The documents analysed for this study mostly were written by outside contract curriculum writers over 10 years ago and since this time only minor revisions have been made.

The current political uncertainties in both countries, combined with the heavy reliance on outside funding, have not assisted policy makers and practitioners in their quest for curriculum renewal. It has been stated earlier that curriculum is a cultural expression of both what is seen to be valued and what is hoped for in the future. In the context of uncertainties in national leadership, it is not surprising that there is little sense of a set of national goals of schooling upon which to plan future directions. The uncertainties associated with outside funding support, which hang over both countries, have resulted in an inability to plan long term and in an unequal distribution of existing funds to the various provinces. As a generalisation, schools are grossly under-funded for the very basic necessities for teaching and learning. However, a common comment by practitioners in both countries and supported by the observation of the researchers, is that some favoured schools are much better resourced than others. When governments allow such a situation to occur, regardless of their motives, they feed social disharmony and undermine the public perception of social justice in government policy and the public service bureaucracy.

It became very clear, very early in this project, that the promotion of social harmony and cohesion are sub-set elements of much broader issues which cohere under the banner of 'national goals'. By discussing what it means to be 'socially educated' and to be a 'good citizen', participants in the study revealed many insights into what it means to be an individual and what it means to be a member of a community, or of multiple communities. Issues of national identity quickly arose. Issues of the acceptance of diversity of cultures arose. And these issues were

embedded in both individual and collective memories, which on occasions betrayed prejudice and expressions of stereotypes. Current education policies and school practices are not addressing these tensions. It has been argued in this report that citizenship is contestable, problematic and in need of constant revitalisation. The failure to recognise and allow for diversity in a broad framework of defining a citizen can only lead to social disharmony. The evidence is that this tension of citizenship is being played out in the current situation in both case study countries. In Vanuatu, the role and the effectiveness of two recent policies – the Education Master Plan (1999) and the Comprehensive Reform Program (1997) – will be critical in cohering a long term strategy to promote social learning. Likewise, in the Solomon Islands, the newly developed 'Strategic Priorities for the Ministry of Education 2002–2005', with its mission of assisting people to 'live in harmony with others', a direct response to the recent tensions, which connects with this project's orientation.

The issues embedded in identifying the extent to which schools and teachers actively encourage student involvement in decision making, and student engagement in social action, are very complex. On the one hand, support for these strategies involves a particular view about teaching and learning. Another component involves beliefs about the relationship between schools and their local communities. We believe that there is now sufficient evidence to support the view that the formal inclusion of topics and subjects in the curriculum with a focus on citizenship is not, in itself, effective in enhancing student ideas about making a positive contribution to their community. Nor is the use of national icons and symbols of themselves, an effective strategy for enhancing social harmony. But when many of these strategies are adopted and adapted and linked, in ways which make sense to particular school communities, then there is the possibility of an effective coherent and sequential program.

It has been argued elsewhere in this report that a defining element in assessing the effectiveness of a school in promoting social tolerance and harmony is the role of the school administration and specifically the role of the principal. This study revealed that the idea of the democratic classroom or democratic decision making processes by the school community were both unknown by most school practitioners. There is some evidence that a disbelief in these notions is culturally based within the broader value of respect. Yet in private conversations many teachers were bitter about their undemocratic treatment as teachers and as individuals by both the education bureaucracy and the principal. Other teachers wanted students to be more active participants in their classes. The conclusion reached was that the pedagogies of values education associated with promoting social harmony and citizenship are largely unpractised by teachers and that a great deal of professional development will be required. The introduction of these democratic pedagogies will also need to be introduced during pre-service training of teachers.

The focus of Report 3 will be on establishing a generic framework for the development of a social education curriculum, specifically tailored to the promotion of social tolerance, social harmony and good citizenship in the Pacific islands.

REFERENCES

Brady,L., & Kennedy,K., (1999) *Curriculum Construction,* Prentice Hall, Australia.

Dewey,J., (1996) *The Child and the Curriculum,* University of Chicago Press, USA.

Gardner, H., (1999) *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century,* Basic Books, New York.

Knight, A., & Pearl, A., (1999) *The Democratic Classroom : Theory to Inform Practice,* Hampton Press, New Jersey.

Wintle, J. (1988). Heat Treatment: Travels Beyond the Orient from Bangkok to the Solomon Islands. London: Dent.

Works Consulted During the Syllabus Review: General

Australian Council for Overseas Aid. (2000). Manmade Disaster in the Solomons: Report of the NGO Mission to Solomon Islands. Deakin, ACT: the Council.

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. (1992). Report on the Primary Curriculum. Prepared by Ian Collingwood, consultant, under assignment from the Overseas Development Administration, UK. Honiara.

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. (2000). Handbook for Curriculum Writers: Working draft. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre (written by Franco Rodie and Janet Davy).

States of Choiseul and Western Solomons. (2000). Education and Human Resource Development – Policy Outlines, Frameworks and Strategies. Gizo.

Vanuatu National Council of Women. (n.d.). Corporate Plan 2000–2004: "Beginning A New Relationship with Our Members". Port Vila.

Curriculum Documents

Curriculum Development Centre, Solomon Islands. (1996). *English Syllabus for Forms 1–5 in Solomon Islands Secondary Schools*. Honiara.

Curriculum Development Centre, Solomon Islands. (1999). *Nguzu Nguzu English: Teacher's Guide, Standard 3*. Honiara.

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1986, trial version) *Social Studies: Forms 1–3 Syllabus*. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre.

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (1998, 2nd ed.) *Social Studies: Forms 4 and 5 Syllabus*. Honiara: Curriculum Development Centre.

Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Training, Department of Primary Curriculum. (1987).

Community Studies Syllabus. Honiara.

Department of Education, Vanuatu. (n.d.). *Religious Education: Teacher's Notes.* 4 volumes: Years 7–10. Port Vila.

Department of Education, Vanuatu. (1993). *Vanuatu Junior Secondary Social Science Syllabus.* Port Vila.

Department of Education, Vanuatu. (1993). *Vanuatu Religious Education Syllabus: Vanuatu Programme de l'Education Religieuse.* Port Vila.

Department of Education, Vanuatu. (1993: printed March 1994). *Social Studies Year 1 Teacher's Guide, Terms 1, 2 &3.* Port Vila.

Department of Education. (1993). *Vanuatu: Agriculture Syllabus: Programme de l'Agriculture.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1997). *Our Communities: Social Science.* Port Vila.

Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6.

Student's Book for Year 1.

Teacher's Guide, Year 1.

Student's Book, Year 2.

Teacher's Guide, Year 2.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1997). *Our Environment: Basic Science*: Teacher's Handbook for Years 1 to 6. Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1997). *The Story of Our Islands, Year 4.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (second revised edition, 1997). *Unified Primary Curriculum: An Introduction and Overview.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (1998). *Our Changing Society: Student's Book, Year 10.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (second revised edition, 1999). *Social Science Syllabus: Programme des Sciences Sociales.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (2000). *Prescription Document for Assessment towards Year 10 Certification.* Port Vila.

Ministry of Education. (2000). *Technology: Teacher's Guide.* Trial version. Port Vila.

Ministry of Education. (2000). *Technology: Student's Book.* Trial version. Port Vila.

Department, then Ministry of Education, Vanuatu. (various). Year 7 Social Science.

Starting Together with Teacher's Guide (Year 7 Book 1).
Our Families: Teacher's Guide only (Year 7 Book 2).
Living in Communities: Teacher's Guide only (Year 7 Book 3).
Our Islands, Our People: Teacher's Guide only (Year 7 Book 4).
What is History? with Teacher's Guide (Year 7 Book 5).

APPENDIX A: ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – School-based Stakeholders Interview Framework

Curriculum documents/policies

Does the school have a complete set of current Ministry curriculum documents?
If not , why not?
To what extent are Ministry curriculum documents/resources available to all teachers?
To what extent are these curriculum documents used as curriculum planners by teachers and schools?
To what extent do students and parents have an understanding of the contents of the curriculum documents?
To what extent do curriculum documents drive/dominate teaching and learning?
To what extent can teachers adapt curriculum documents to suit the locality/their own style?
To what extent do curriculum documents focus on local/island/national/global issues?
Do you support the idea of a national curriculum and/or do you support locally/provincially developed curriculum? Why? What are the benefits? Who should be involved? How would you like to be involved?

School governance

What are the traditional processes/patterns of decision making/leadership in the local community?
How do these processes work? In what ways does the community benefit?
Are modifications to the traditional processes possible, and if so how might they be initiated?
Should these traditional ways of decision making be encouraged/taught in schools?
How would you describe the decision making style of your school?
Who and/or what factors determine the style of leadership/school governance in the school?
To what extent do individuals/collectively teachers contribute to decision making in the school?
In what ways do students contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
In what ways do parents contribute to decision making in the school? Examples?
When/what was the last time you participated in some aspect of your local school activities?
What would be the most appropriate style of school governance for your community or school? Why?

Classroom practices

To what extent do examinations drive classroom practices? Is this OK?
Can you name some social issues that have been discussed in your classes?
Why were these particular issues raised in class?
To what extent do teachers encourage/allow for the addressing of social issues in classrooms?
If so, how is this done?
Do you think teachers impose their values on the students? When?
What are the blockers that prevent active student engagement in social issues?
To what extent and in what ways do parents and others contribute to classroom practices?
What is the most commonly used teaching and learning pedagogy? Why is this the one? Who decides?
What do understand by the term 'democratic classroom'?
Do you support a democratic classroom?
How do you as a teacher /parent feel about sharing decision making with students?
How important is it for students to be taught and learn in their own local language?

How often does this happen in your school/ classroom? Why this often? Under what conditions?
Is there a punishment/reward regime in this school?
How often have you experienced/witnessed intolerance, culturally insensitive behaviour and verbal/physical abuse in your classroom/school?
How important do you believe modelling in school and family are to young people learning and practising tolerance?

Curriculum content

What are the most important things students should learn in school?
What skills are important?
Who should decide which values are the important ones for young people to learn?
Should school teach values? If yes, what values?
Can schools teach young people to be a 'good citizen'?
How important is it for students to practice how to be a 'good citizen/person at school?
How might this be done?
How important is it for schools to include topics that encourage social tolerance and cohesion in the curriculum? Why?
Do you think schools are in fact engaging in the teaching and learning of these values already?
Is it important that religious education is part of the school curriculum?
Is religious education the appropriate curriculum area to teach about values?
How important is it that the curriculum allows for/encourages the teaching and learning of local issues/skills/ content?
Should students develop a global perspective?
What are the most important aspects of the curriculum? Why?
To what extent do you think schools/the current curriculum are providing what you want out of education for young people? What's missing?
Has the curriculum changed since you were at school? If so, for the better? Why?

The possibilities

What's the best thing that schools are doing at the moment?
What's the thing that they could do a lot better?
In an ideal world what would you most like changed at your school?
What do hope that your school can most offer to all of its young people ?
What can the school system do for the young people who drop out of school, say after grade 6?
What are schools for?
What do you understand by the term 'social tolerance'? What are some of its essential parts?
What goals can you envisage coming true for you and your place?
What is the role of social tolerance in this picture?
While acknowledging the recent tensions how would you describe the extent of 'social tolerance' in your community/country now?
What are the biggest obstacles preventing peace/social tolerance in your community?
When you think about the future of your country/province/village, what sort of picture do you have in your mind?

In this project we will be organising a reflective workshop in mid year. What would you like to tell decision makers to consider in their deliberations on what schools can contribute to social tolerance, community participation and democratic processes?

THE PACIFIC ISLANDS PROJECT

PROMOTING SOCIAL TOLERANCE AND COHESION THROUGH EDUCATION

REPORT 3: AN EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL COHESION AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor
Graeme Withers

September 2001

Deakin University

And

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: THE PLACE OF REPORT 3 IN THE WORLD BANK PROJECT

The focus of this third report is outlined in the project s Terms of Reference. It is

a framework for the development of a school-based education for mutual understanding agenda, specifically tailored to Pacific Island conditions, that promotes national cohesion and democratic participation, while respecting cultural diversity and social tolerance. This framework should strive to provide a foundation for policymakers to review and address the role of schooling in promoting social cohesion, as well as some basic instruments for teachers to include values education in their daily practices.

Being the third report, this report might be considered to represent the accumulated wisdom generated by the data collected in the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu for the two previous reports to the World Bank. The major activities of the project in both countries, again as outlined in the Terms of Reference, included:

- A Stakeholder Assessment Report on stakeholders perceptions of the role schools currently do and might play in promoting social tolerance and cohesion (July 2001)
- An Operational Assessment Report on school-based practices regarding cultural understandings, democratic participation and social cohesion (August 2001)
- A Reflective Workshop organised in both countries to promote discussion among local stakeholders about education for mutual understanding and to share findings of the first two reports (May/June 2001)
- A Presentation Meeting in both countries in which all three reports will be discussed by the researchers and key policy stakeholders (August/September 2001)

This report, therefore, marks both the conclusion of the project and sets the scene for future consideration of the data and evidence collected in the course of this project by local stakeholders and educational policy makers.

SECTION 2: CONCEPTUALISING A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR A PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

The researchers strongly believe that we are not in a position to formulate specific policy for countries. It has been argued throughout the first two reports that educational policy and its application in the form of school curriculum are social constructions based on community cultural values. In both countries in this study, the stakeholders made it very clear that while they can see benefits from working with outside education agencies, the prime responsibility for policy formation rests squarely with local authorities. What is proposed in this final report is, therefore, an educational framework, or a set of generic principles and guidelines, which, we believe, might be useful for local educational policy makers to consider in the context of the Pacific Islands. Our experience in this project also tells us that there are problems generalising between nations or even with generalising within a nation, such is the cultural diversity within the region. Hence the concept of a framework or a guiding set of principles, is an effective strategy for both developing a coherent policy while at the same time allowing for, and recognising, diversity within the region. This policy strategy, of central guidelines which include recognition of local diversity, received very strong support from stakeholders across all sectors during the course of the project.

The experiences gained in working on the early phases of the project, as outlined in Report 1, set the parameters and the scope of the task. In the report the researchers argued that while the direction of the project appeared to be quite specific, that is, an examination of how social tolerance and harmony can be promoted through education, it very quickly became obvious that the issues highlighted in discussions with stakeholders were broader than the brief implied. The promotion of social tolerance was seen by stakeholders in both countries to be but one dimension of what schools could aim for in the promotion of good citizenship as defined by the project research team.

Referencing both the cultural diversity, and synergies in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the data collected during the field work in three locations in each country, demonstrated a congruence of view existed between stakeholders both within and between the two countries, on many issues related to the enhancement of social tolerance and harmony,

The following ideas about the role of a public education system represent a summary of the most commonly expressed views by community and practitioner stakeholders in both countries. Analysis of the views indicated a series of values and assumptions about the role of public education which need to be considered in the development of an educational framework.

- Stakeholders in the broad community believed, even in the context of severe financial obstacles, that the purpose of public education includes providing quality education for all students. They believed that its purpose extended beyond this, because public education was seen to not only cater for the public, but it also helped to shape and create the public body. Education for the public good should include the learning necessary to enhance the well being of communities (for the common wealth) and also to produce civil government (for citizens and families). A major purpose of developing a public education policy framework is therefore both individual (private benefits) and social (the public good).

- In order to create and maintain a public domain of a school system, an educational policy framework and its agent, schools, need to have a particular emphasis on values and procedures which, in broad terms, can be described as democratic. Practitioner stakeholders believed that students should be expected to learn in school how to live and make decisions together. They believed public schools should provide their students with democratic learning outcomes: a belief in the importance of tolerance, empathy, a regard for due process , for natural and social justice, and a commitment to active participation in social and public life.

- Equity in enrolment and attendance policies ws a matter of major concern to stakeholders. Their view was that the criteria for an enrolment and attendance policy framework for a public education system must be consistent with its public mission. Enrolment and attendance policy must cater for the public and the criteria must be public and equitable, and not based on the ability to pay, or on nepotism. Likewise student exclusion policies from public schools must be transparent and equitable and not based solely on the use of examination results and inability to pay fees.

- Adult stakeholders in both countries were educated within a colonial education tradition which placed much emphasis on a centralised model of decision making. This centralist tradition is reinforced by a number of factors including the churches and colonial powers. These stakeholders believe that the development of an educational policy framework for public schools in a post colonial context needs to recognise the public s rights and responsibilities in participating in policy development and the governance of schools in the system. Public consultation in the formulation of policy, managing change, and reviewing performance is a critical element in the management style of public education systems.

- The most common form of expression of this belief in public participation came in the desire by local communities for teaching and learning in the local vernacular. Two systemic expressions of support for this belief from educational policy makers have been the policies of community high schools, and in vernacular teaching in early grades of primary school.

- Another consideration in the development of an educational policy framework for a public school system is to the need to develop strategies which ensure some kind of equity between sites by more equitable public funding and support in the provision of education. Practitioner stakeholders frequently commented on what they saw as a reverse ripple effect. The further the location away from the capital, the greater the likelihood of not receiving equitable funding. This sense of inequity in education funding was often framed within a more general criticism of inequities across the provision of welfare and other public services.

- Stakeholders commonly supported some form of decentralisation of decision making to create a more equitable distribution of resources to public education (and other services). For practitioner stakeholders this generally meant an increased role firstly at the Provincial Education Office level and then secondly at the school level. For community stakeholders the focus was a more decentralised structure, allowing local communities to feel they were more than just a mechanism upon which an increased share of funding was being placed. This was often seen as being unfair in principle and divisive across the country particularly in those communities far distant from the decision makers in the capital.

Educational policy makers have a number of options in administering policy within a public education system. At one end of the spectrum is an approach which centralises policy decision making inside a national and/or state bureaucracy. At the other end of the spectrum is a school-based model which gives individual schools the power to develop their own individual curriculum. In the middle sits the notion of a curriculum framework. In this model, a national or state central education authority develops a set of policy frameworks or guidelines, which centrally establishes the goals or outcomes for the curriculum. Usually this model also determines the related assessment mechanism to measure student learning. The flexibility in this framework policy strategy arises from a school s ability to devise its own teaching and learning strategies to implement and achieve the centralised outcomes.

An educational policy framework is neither a syllabus, nor is it a curriculum. By suggesting that a framework be established as the concluding component of this project, the World Bank itself has, we believe, recognised the role of the whole school community in the decision making processes of their local school. In countries which proclaim to be guided by democratic principles the development of an educational policy framework for public schools needs to recognise the public s rights and responsibilities in participating in the designing of governance of the system. This is clearly not just a simple matter of rights. Some democratic countries have

a tradition of centralised education systems and the instigation of public consultation in the formulation of policy requires a culture shift by both the traditional policy makers towards power sharing and by the public which may have long expected the bureaucracy alone to deliver the services. In the Pacific region, views about the provision of formal schooling are based on past traditions about colonial powers and the churches,, and, more recently, the central national governments as the key providers of education. The sharing of decision-making in a policy framework strategy will therefore need a great deal of sensitive and persistent negotiations with all stakeholders.

Finally, there are concerns in developing an educational framework in schools in the area of social learning outside of the broader school/systemic educational policy framework. Curriculum is the expression of the total coherent learning experience in schools, so to articulate one component of it outside the overall goals of education denies the holistic nature of learning. On an even broader canvas, to develop a social learning agenda outside the aspirations of a nation is to also compartmentalise learning and is to isolate the values and assumptions that underpin all educational policies.

What follows in this report is an attempt to develop a kind of road map in which a series of signposts are used to signal significant steps in the development of a policy framework. In this instance, the signposts are pointing towards the destination of the role education can play in promoting social harmony.

SECTION 3: CONCEPTUALISING SOCIAL TOLERANCE WITHIN THIS EDUCATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

In coming to terms with the nature and scope of what an educational framework, suited to the promotion of social learning, should contain, we have grappled with a range of conceptual issues involved in the teaching and learning of values. A couple of questions loom large. Firstly, does the intense social conditioning we all go through, result in people being wary of difference? Secondly, the framing of this project around the concept of social tolerance can be seen to have a somewhat negative reactive connotation attached to it. Tolerance can be taken to imply an almost grudging acceptance, a reluctant acknowledgment that those who are different have rights.

In the context of this study we have come to the conclusion that to focus on social tolerance, per se, does not capture the broader more positive components of social cohesion and social harmony. Taken further, tolerance implies an acceptance of the authority of others who say we must tolerate those in the community who are different from us. So tolerance is the positive form of the intolerance, but it is not the opposite of intolerance. (Scott, 2001) As an example, people from one island might tolerate people from another island, but they do not accept them. They do not invite them into their homes. They tolerate them sometimes because the law says they must.

The development of an educational policy framework in the area of social learning, and specifically dealing with social tolerance clearly need to recognise the many broader societal factors with which a community may not have come to terms. Intolerance begins when the patience and good will, the openness, and the generosity of spirit which is required in multicultural societies to keep them functional, runs out. It is when those who are different from us cross some imaginary boundary of our minds, or when some demagogue or hegemonic group arises and gives us a reason to bury our tolerance and legitimises the means to oppose those who we fear, and gives an imprimatur to take action, like a riot, or a shooting or forced emigration. Embodied in this scenario is a rationale for why governments need to develop active policies to support tolerance, or more particularly, to create an environment in which the broader goal of social harmony undermines any predisposition towards intolerance.

So can an imposed educational policy framework for schools impact upon the way a person thinks, feels and behaves? Can an educational policy and curriculum bring about a change in social learning? And can legislation marginalise racists, bigots and extremist political parties? It has been argued in the first two reports that, in our view, the primary role of schools is to assist young people to be positive, active and contributing citizens. To believe this is to believe that schools can make a difference in social learning. Our reading of the current climate in formal education indicates that there is a far greater emphasis being given in schools, in western and emerging democracies, to the achievement of basic skills and vocational skills. Social learning has consequently suffered in its place in school curriculum. We will argue in this report that social learning needs to be central to the framing of educational policy.

The educational framework proposed in this report is predicated on the belief that change must be framed and welcomed by the community(s) and not forced on them by an often-distant centralised authority. Nor can harmony be achieved in the broader context of anger and aggression.

SECTION 4: CONTEXTUALISING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS EDUCATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Reports 1 and 2 in this study have sections in them documenting the broad national contexts of Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands in which this project was placed, therefore there is no need to repeat contextual factors here in any detail. However a summary of key contextual factors is worthwhile here, in order to physically place them closer to the following discussions about educational frameworks. The researchers contend that the factors below come from the data collected during the case study interviews, and not from interpretation of those data. The two countries are not being compared and some factors are more significant in one place than others. Likewise other countries in the Pacific region are not being placed in this particular context and readers will need to exercise caution in extrapolating from the data from just two countries.

- Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands are newly created nations, having forged nationhood from previously-unconnected islands.
- Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands formed nationhood from many islands, of differing geographic and population sizes, some physically isolated from other islands, some islands situated a long distance from the capital.
- The impact of colonisation can still be observed on a number of levels.
- The populations on the many islands of Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands have very diverse cultural and linguistic traditions.
- There are some tensions between cultural groups.
- The establishment of a nation with a centralised national government has created some tensions among islanders, some of which are seeking a federation structure in the distribution of power.
- The vast majority of people in both countries live on the land, as subsistence farmers, contributing to a localised rural economy.
- A growing minority live in the few urban areas and their lifestyle and aspirations differ considerably from those of rural farmers.
- An individual s sense of location centres more around the family and the village or island than with the nation.
- Religion is a significant provider of information about ethics and morality.
- As nations with small populations, contacts with the global economy and globalisation in general, have been relatively recent but are increasing.
- Governments are unable to fund educational services to the level they wish; that is at a level required to achieve their goals, or to satisfy local demand.
- External funding aid supplements national funding and is sometimes not in the control of the nation s decision-makers.
- Disparity in funding is inequitable and creates tensions, so that the political system that should be supporting social and cultural cohesion becomes an instrument which weakens it.

- The decision by the relatively-new national governments to assume responsibility for a wide range of services, spread over a vast geographical distance, has created stresses in the total well-being of the nations. The inability to generate sufficient national income to support these services, coupled with the community s growing expectation that the services should be provided from national rather than local budgets, has resulted in a trend to fund these services with overseas borrowings. This has left small national economies vulnerable. The downturn in rural commodity prices has created huge foreign debts.

Signs of stress and symptoms of a deficit in well-being, are not hard to find in both countries, but it is particularly noticeable in the Solomon Islands. Signs such as poverty (particularly in rural and urban fringe areas), unemployment, the widening gap between rich and poor, relationship breakdown are intertwined with other indicators of social stress and distress; substance abuse, gambling, truancy, loss of self-esteem and a disenchantment with, and alienation from, mainstream socio-political traditions.

Since concepts such as equal or fair distribution of the resources of a community and access to decision-making processes lie at the heart of what living in a democracy means, it is not surprising that feelings of frustration, alienation and exclusion are strong.

The options for action available to communities in both case study countries are varied. In the Solomon Islands and in Vanuatu, some communities have searched for ways - often at great risk to themselves and others to intervene in the pr evailing course of events. One example, is the rioting in Port Vila, in 1998, as a result of peoples dissatisfaction with government actions over the loss of savings in a credit union collapse.

Governments have responded in different ways to the recent waves of community unrest. The researchers formed the impression that Solomon Islands government actions on the distribution of reparations funds, to date, for example, have only resulted in consolidating people s sense of inevitability, with associated feelings of impotence, alienation and despair.

Educational institutions are doubly involved. As socially relevant institutions, schools are themselves social environments in which people experience a broad range of interactions. Education and training are processes of preparation, for work, but also, more generally, for taking one s place in society. It is worth considering how such preparation could possibly be effective in the absence of any systematic deliberation of the above social issues.

In summary, both local and global forces appear to be polarising community aspirations in both countries. The strength of the forces are not the same in both countries, nor are the same forces operating in the same ways in both countries. It is our view that the current stresses and tensions can best be expressed as a cluster of bipolar concepts, such as appear in the listing which follows. Once named by the countries, these bi-polar concepts represent some of the tensions which require resolution. Resolution lies somewhere along the spectrum between the two end-points

Bi-Polar Concepts and Forces at Work in Emerging Democracies

- individual autonomy vs collective interdependence
- private vs public
- freedom of choice vs mutual constraint
- small government vs big government
- individual autonomy vs collective interdependence
- private vs public
- quality vs equality
- individual responsibility vs mutual responsibility
- competition vs cohesion
- self-interest vs mutual interest
- individual authority vs external authority

SECTION 5: A SCHEMA FOR DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR POLICYMAKERS TO ADDRESS THE ROLE OF SCHOOLING IN PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION AND CITIZENSHIP

This section of the report identifies a number of key elements in an educational policy framework to promote social harmony. Each of these key elements will be closely described and analysed Although the framework is generic in nature, particular attention has been given to the Pacific islands context. As stated earlier, the framework proposed in this report is a kind of roadmap. It consists of a series of sequential signposts, which lead towards the destination of social harmony and an enunciation of the role education can play in its achievement. The signposts, or sequential steps, indicate a number of suggested routes by which a country can arrive at the final destination. Some of these steps involve taking short term decisions, while others involve more long term considerations. The choice of vehicle to be taken on the journey is not the prerogative of the researchers of this project. The researchers are unable to make this decision. This decision is one for local communities. As authors of this report we have tried to assist the journey makers by indicating potential difficulties and issues that might need to be confronted along the way. However it is up to the journey makers to identify their particular set of difficulties and also to take advantage of their knowledge of local routes. It may be possible for them to ask for roadside assistance along the route from other providers and also to seek further assistance at the end of the journey for future travels.

The diagram which follows on page 9 is a schema indicating a series of sequential stages which need to be undertaken in developing an education policy framework to enhance social harmony. In order to assist the traveller, at each stage we have described the scenery and analysed the potential of each stage to contribute to the goal of reaching the final destination of the journey. The authors believe that, in order to reach the final destination, it is not possible to take short cuts or to avoid some of the stages. All stages in the journey must be visited.

The Schema for an Education Policy Framework

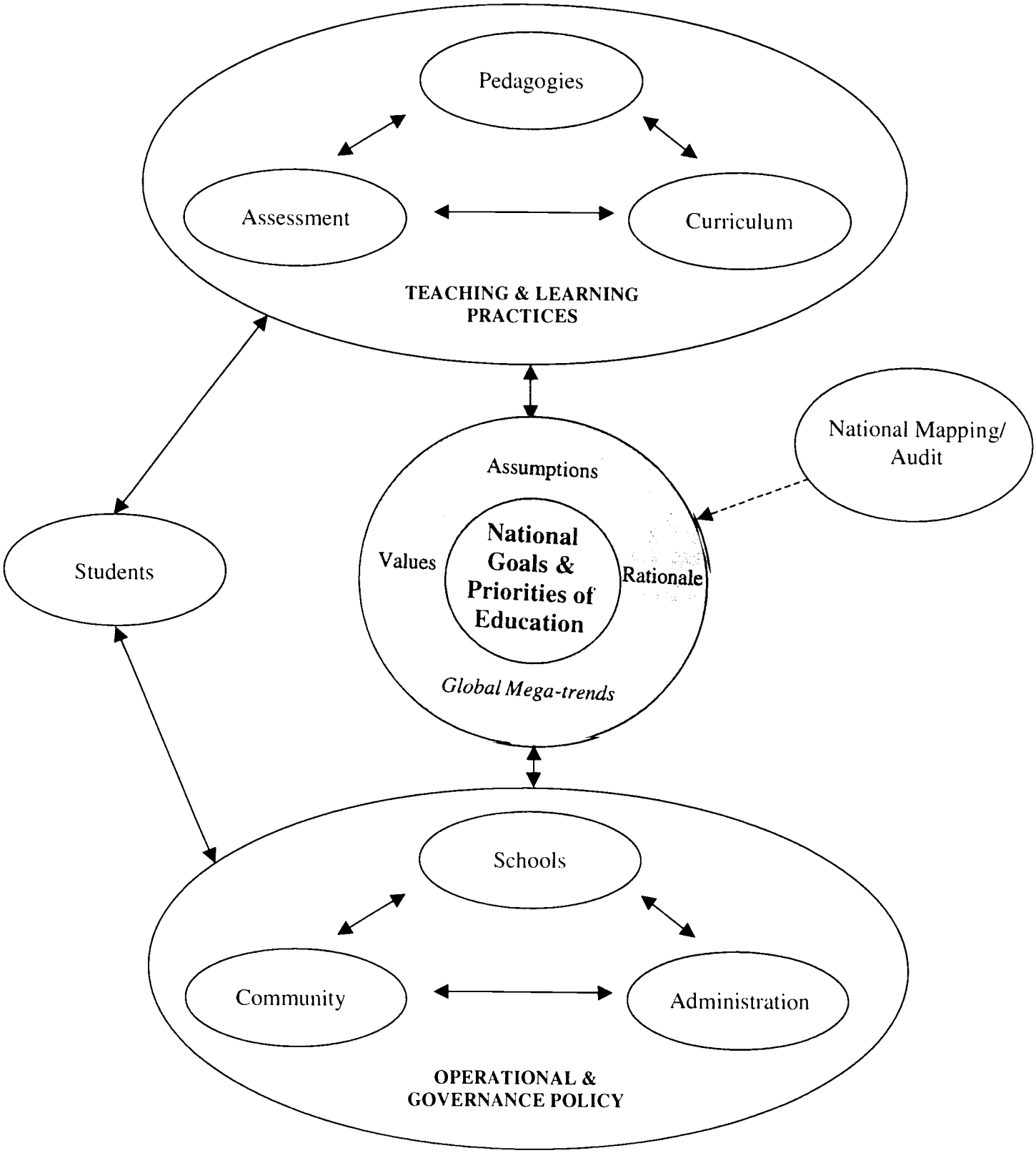
The Schema for a Policy Framework is a conceptual map. Each component of the Schema will be examined in terms of its focus, its underlying principles and values, its relationship to the national goals of education and its contribution to the achievement of a policy framework to enhance social harmony and effective citizenship. Taken together these component parts constitute the Schema.

At the core of the Schema are the National Goals and the Priorities selected and agreed upon by the nation. Immediately surrounding those National Goals, and directly impinging upon them, are the Values, Assumptions and Rationale for the National Goals. Also directly impinging on the National Goals are the Global Mega-trends. Beyond those two circles of core activities are a range of agents which both act upon and are impacted by the National Goals. They are additional areas of policy formation, and these policies are the ways in which the National Goals can be implemented.

The text which follows will both articulate the Schema, and it will also introduce the processes which any participants who are developing a national policy framework, need to engage. The initial policy work must always be the articulation of Goals (and Priorities thereafter). Section 6 of this report deals with this aspect of the Schema and its processes. In constructing the text about the implementation of the framework, the writers, of necessity, can only deal with one aspect of the Schema at a time. However, in the real world of action, the policy-formation needs to involve all parts of the Schema at once. All the components of the Schema are inter-related and cannot be considered in isolation from the articulation of a set of national goals of education.

THE SCHEMA FOR AN EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

A conceptual map for an education policy framework to enhance social harmony and citizenship.



SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE ONE

(i) National Goals of Education and Training

This World Bank Social Tolerance project was in search of a framework for educational action. Any discussion of what such a framework might consist of should start with a call for a clearly stated, relevant, locally developed, comprehensive and powerful set of national goals of education. Without such a set of goals, pedagogical action, curriculum and assessment are more likely to be piecemeal rather than integrated. Pedagogy is more likely to be unresponsive to, or unknowing of, whole fields of possibility for improvement of student learning and personal and social development.

Thus, National Goals are the core of the proposed Schema. They are at the heart of any policy framework and achieving those goals is the desired destination of those using this road map. The National Goals could incorporate national goals of education and training. If the framework is to have national impact on all young people, then it should include goals for all young people those who are currently in school and those who might wish in to be undertaking vocational training.

These National Goals can be described as a set of attributes citizens will attain or develop whilst at school. When we conceptualise and define the attributes of the sort of citizen who should, ideally, join the wider society after his or her experience of education and training, we are in effect talking about everybody the citizenry at large. The attributes desired of the citizen may be categorised, grouped and listed in various ways, and will be descriptive of an ideal citizen.

National Goals of education and training are not the whole of the framework we propose. At the next stage, the framework for implementing a program specifically aimed at enhancing social tolerance and cohesion within the overall process of student social development, would focus on a sub-set of those specifics of behaviour, values, attitudes, dispositions and learnings which the National Goals describe, promulgate and promote.

The importance of the National Goals will need to be established and accepted, their wider relevance will then be understood, and the links between the framework and other aspects of educational provision (administration; infrastructure; implementation, provision of resources) will be understood to be clear at all times. Without this interdependent relationship, any attempt at a framework is going to seem arbitrary at best, vague or partial at worst. It should preclude the tendency to focus on aspects of the educational system in isolation from other aspects, thus having an underdeveloped view of the whole system and its purposes.

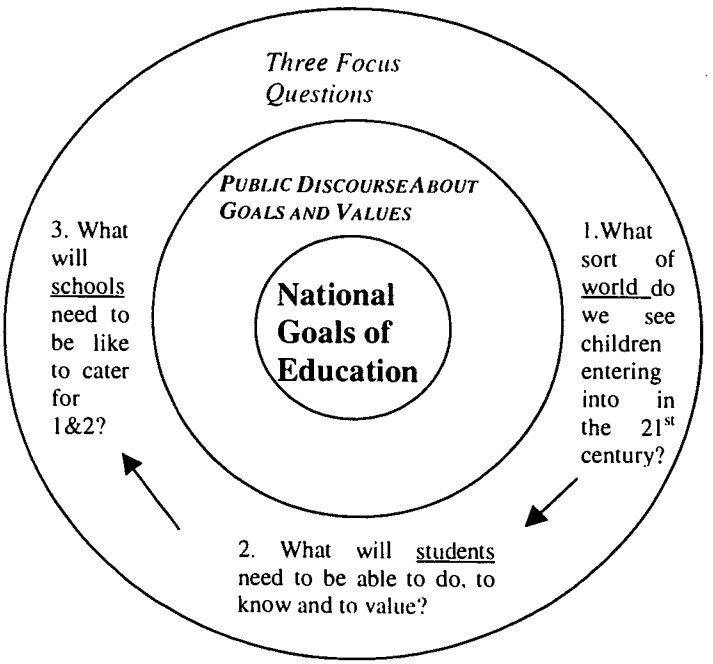
The process of developing the goals themselves would provide an opportunity for the country to explore, define and eventually implement the various aspects of the framework. For example, if the National Goals were to be unanimously formulated in student-centred terms (every student will be X, or be able to do X) then a clear message is given to teachers about the nature of their work in implementing the goals focus on the child first, and the process by which to achieve the goals (curriculum details, pedagogy, assessment), second.

The process of developing national goals of education can be represented by the following diagram. In this process, we believe that the three questions posed in the outer circle should form the basis of, and give direction to, the essential community discussion about national goals. A society/community needs to frame answers to each of these three questions, for from them will derive the key national goals.

Leadership in creating opportunities for broad community discussion and public debate of the three sequential questions needs to come from those authorities which currently hold decision making power in education. It is unlikely that communities themselves will have appropriate knowledge of the processes needed to steer such a complex strategy through community participation to policy formation. The authorities, alone, cannot underwrite and ensure such processes reach fruition. The community must be involved. The experience of other countries

which have engaged in a similar exercise, indicates that the process is indeed a very complex and time consuming one. In part this is a result of the nature of the three questions which embody much broader issues than education, touching also on national goals and aspirations.

Questions within a Discourse to Develop National Goals of Education



Strategy models for involving the community in the discussion of national issues already exist in the region. The following four examples were observed by researchers during the case study work, conducted in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, as part of this project.

- In Vanuatu, in 2001, public meetings in schools and villages were conducted as part of the Comprehensive Reform Program by the national government. This illustrates one such strategy for large scale community consultation.

- In the Solomon Islands, also in 2001, the national newspaper adopted a variation of the model for community consultation when it sponsored a student essay writing competition, seeking a discussion of ways of restoring social harmony amongst young people.

- Another example of a strategy for discussing the development of national goals of education was the reflective workshop held in Vanuatu in June 2001, as part of this World Bank project and the participants represented a wide cross section of stakeholders in the education sector. Appendix 1 is a listing of a set of national goals of education for Vanuatu, developed by groups of workshop participants. Appendix 2 is a re-shaping or clustering of the goal statements, into one document, by one of the authors of this report. The document now has a generic quality which enables it to be useful in other Pacific Countries.

- A further example of the kind of processes to be employed in the development of goals of education is from the Solomon Islands. (Appendix 3) Here a group of educator stakeholders from two provinces met to plan for the development of a joint set of goals for their provinces. This consultative and local process could be extrapolated to discussions occurring in all provinces in a country, with the final development of national goals of education being derived from the sets of provincial goals.

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE ONE

(ii) Developing Priorities in National Education Goals

In the context of limited funds for the provision of educational services, and the complexities of the realpolitik , some form of priority listing of national goals will always be necessary. Attempting some goals might rely on the achievement of other goals. Some goals might need to be seen in the context of other goals. Some goals might be of the stand alone kind. Some goals might be more achievable in some locations than others. Some goals might require considerable more funding than others, and thus must wait for implementation.

It is our impression that in the two case study countries, the lack of a set of national goals of education and therefore the lack of a sense of priorities, has resulted in what one very senior education ministry administrator called a putting out of bushfires approach to education planning and policy implementation. This approach particularly applies to the Solomon Islands where the daily survival of the education system is precariously balanced due mostly to a lack of funding. In Vanuatu, the approach is more one of attempting to accommodate a number of post-colonial legacies in the form of pressure groups within the education sector. These impressions do not deny the all too obvious and multi-faceted problems facing both countries in the provision of education services. But the lack of a publicly supported set of national priorities for education is a serious hindrance to the development and implementation of a framework for education. One explanation for this lack of priorities, and the prior lack of national goals is the precarious political situation in both countries whereby long term planning is difficult due to the instability of national government policy.

One result of this kind of situation, where neither goals nor priorities have been publicly discussed and agreed upon, is the almost random selection of a problem to be fixed approach. In this model, a problem is identified as an urgent priority , data on the problem is collected and an implementation plan is developed, frequently by a consultant and without community consultation. Because the problem is considered in isolation from its causes, its place in relation to a holistic picture of the goals of an educational system is not properly grasped. Thus the effect of the solution can only be partial. Such piecemeal policy development is not unusual in the two case-study countries, supported by well-meaning international aid agencies.

The research team does not see as its role the development of a set of priorities of national goals of education for other countries. However, goals of education from the following list were often affirmed by stakeholders in both case study countries, and they could be selected as Priorities.

National Goals which Relate to Social Tolerance Objectives

- Maintenance and strengthening of cultural traditions
- Enhancement of what it means to be a citizen
- Development of vocational and rural work skills
- Development of a national languages policy
- Increase in literacy skills
- Equitable distribution of funding to education across the nation
- Rewriting of curriculum to suit local priorities

It would not be surprising if the society/community developed many National Goals of Education. Developing nations generally feel they have much catching up to do, and therefore a great deal to achieve in the field of formal education.

To reiterate: a country cannot establish its National Priorities until it has discussed and agreed upon its National Goals. The former is a sub-set of the latter category.

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE ONE

(iii) Values / Assumptions / Rationale Underpinning National Goals

The second level of articulation of the Schema unpacks those Values, Assumptions as well as the Rationale which underpin the National Goals and Priorities. They inform the National Goals and Priorities. Additionally, in deciding on the National Goals and Priorities, further clarification of the values, assumptions and the rationale is achieved. The process is one that looks like this.

The central question here is: What are schools are for?
Some examples might include :

- Supporting cultural traditions
- Enhancing ethical and spiritual behaviours
- Enhancing bodies of knowledge as currently outlined in school curriculum
- Developing skills and competencies related to employment
- Assisting young people to be good citizens
- Promoting social cohesion

Some values that might underpin the role of schools in enhancing social harmony:

- **Social justice** (Education as a means of sharing the commonwealth)
- **Access** (Education for ALL students, regardless of location and financial capacity)
- **Equity** (For all students in all age groups and between genders)
- **Participation** (Inclusion in decision-making, for all stakeholders: students, teachers, the community, Ministry officials)
- **Human rights** (All policy to be supportive of the UN Declaration of Rights of the Child)

Rationales given for the above views might include:

- A recognition of cultural diversity in the community
- A recognition of particular demographics of the country
- A belief in the conservation of cultural traditions
- A recognition of impact of globalisation
- A belief in democratic participation

Reports 1 and 2 of this project indicated both the commonalities and the diversity of views and practices about the role schools might play in enhancing social harmony.

In *Report 1: Stakeholders Assessment,* stakeholders views invariably reflected a particular value position and certain assumptions about schooling. Sometimes these views were a personal perspective, at other times they represented an organisation s view. In *Report 2: Operational Assessment*, observations of the operations of schools indicated that schools also carry with them beliefs and assumptions about the role of education for young people. Participants in the process of developing national goals of education and a policy framework to enhance social harmony and to promote citizenship, need to clearly articulate *why* they hold their views, *why* their views are important and *what* assumptions about life values are embedded in their views about education policies and school operations. Values clarification must be paramount to the process.

Though rarely understood or acknowledged by stakeholders, the following school operations are affected by values and assumptions, and articulation of them is essential to the process.

School organisation
Assessment and reporting practices
Use of resources
Pedagogic practices
Program Evaluations

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE ONE

(iv) Mega-trends

An additional factor which impacts on the formation of National Goals, though somewhat differently to Values and Assumptions, is the Mega-trends. The Schema has this factor in the circle immediately beyond the National Goals because its impact is great.

The majority of stakeholders in the two case study countries rarely commented on the impact of global mega-trends on their views or on their lives. Most of them did not see any connection between their views about current tensions (social, economic or political) or their views about future national aspirations and directions, and global mega-trends. Some stakeholders, particularly those in urban areas and/or with overseas experiences, were alert to the impact of globalisation on the well being of their community. For the latter group it was a paramount factor in their interpretation of national goals of education, as they saw its impact as considerable and as negative.

In our view the issue has moved beyond the point of whether countries in the Pacific region should embrace or reject globalisation. The reality is that they have not and are unable to avoid its impact. The issue is to what extent, and in what ways, nations are prepared to accommodate its impact. For some stakeholders who had as one national goal of education the return to more traditional values, what to do with global influences is an almost-insuperable problem.

Globalisation has the potential to both create further social divisions in communities and also has the potential to enhance social harmony. The first question posed in the *Questions within a Discourse to Develop National Goals of Education,* asked about the nature of the world people see for children who are about to begin schooling. Its significance becomes more evident in the face of the issue of mega-trends. We found, in the national reflective workshops in both case study countries, that the participants, while thinking the question was an important one, found it difficult to imagine and envisage the features of a future world. Yet they could easily comment on the visible evidence of globalisation which daily impacted on their lives. It is our experience that, with guided discussion, communities in the most remote locations also can engage in this discussion, for they too have been touched by these mega-trends. The use of solar power to generate power for villages, for example, invites huge shifts in the ability to rapidly communicate with other locations. Relationships are unutterably altered as a result.

The following list of mega-trends is not meant to be exhaustive, but could form the beginnings of community discussions.

- Globalisation and its impact on local economies and social values.
- The ability of global media conglomerates to infiltrate traditional local forms of communication.
- The use of information technologies.
- Attacks on traditional values/customs/religions by global trends.
- Youth unemployment resulting from, for example, the demographic trend of urban living.
- The global impact and spread of AIDS
- Social alienation and social injustices resulting, for example, from urban living
- The rapidity of change and the need for flexibility and change managers
- Confusion about identities, for example, resulting from changes in national boundaries and immigration.
- Environmental pressures and challenges, sometimes resulting from the impact of multi-national companies on local communities.
- Severe reduction of the saleability of rural and marine production

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE TWO

(v) National Mapping and Audit

Alongside the identification and articulation of a set of national goals of schooling, the systematic and reliable identification of the current resources available to an education system is a key step in the development of national goals of education and, specifically, for the development of a policy framework for social learning in schools. National Goals cannot operate in some form of resource vacuum. Any implementation strategy will need to rely on the identification of what resources are available to assist in the implementation. A policy framework which has as its focus the promotion of social harmony will need to ensure that the collected data will be made available to all interested members of the community and will be used as a foundation stone to develop educational policy.

A particular challenge facing countries in the Pacific region is the geographic spread of many of its resources and lack of appropriate technologies to systematically collect and collate the required data. It is our experience that education administrations vary in their ability to collate this data. In Vanuatu, for example, the annual reports of the Ministry of Education and Sport give reasonable background data upon which to engage in public discussion about what is possible, both in the short and long term. The following table suggests some basic areas of data necessary for a national audit. It suggests that the collection of such data is important. It does not imply that much of this information is not already in existence in one form or another. We would, however, suggest that much of this information is not currently publicly available. Thus it is not in a form which could contribute to public discussion of the relationship between national goals and available resources to achieve these goals.

We urge both the collection and a ready public access to such data.

DATA COLLECTION FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Students	Teachers	School facilities and resources	Administration	Funding
Numbers	Numbers	Audit of school buildings	Ministry Structure	Sources
Location	Sectors	Library holdings	Job description	Distribution
Ages	Qualifications	Class materials	Performance	Amount
Gender	Age & Gender	Maintenance	Accountability	NGOs
Disabilities	Professional development	Shortages	Prov.Ed.Office.	
Retention rates	Specialism	Funding	Curriculum Develop t Centre	
Sectors	School	School Council	Teachers College	
Grades	Position			
	Place of Birth			

KEY FRAMING QUESTIONS

(TO BE ASKED OF DATA COLLECTED IN THE NATIONAL AUDIT)

To what extent are the current levels of access & equity participation contributing to Social Tolerance?	**What is the extent of teachers understandings of skills about social harmony**	**What is the extent of the physical resources and facilities which contribute to social justice?**	**To what extent does the current system promote a) national cohesion? b) democratic modelling? c) cultural diversity?**	**What is the extent of available funds to support the achievement of national goals and priorities?**

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE THREE

Teaching and Learning Practices Cluster

The main focus of this study, into the role schools can play in promoting positive social learning, required the research team to investigate teaching and learning practices in the two case study countries. This was one of the two major areas of fieldwork investigation, and research team s findings were outlined in Report 2. In addition to interviewing stakeholders, curriculum documents and policies were analysed in terms of their contribution to enhancing social harmony. Assessment procedures were reviewed in terms of their relationship to the social components of the curriculum and to the enhancement of social justice. Fieldwork visits to schools and to teachers colleges enabled some observations to be made about the appropriateness of current classroom pedagogies to the promotion of social cohesion and democratic participation.

The achievement of an effective educational framework to enhance social harmony requires that the three components of teaching and learning curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are all closely connected to each other, and, in turn, are, as a group, closely connected to the national goals of education. The sections below examine the three components of teaching and learning in terms of their individual contribution to the enhancement of social harmony

It is our impression that in both case study countries there is a high degree of disjuncture between the three central components of education. In part the explanation for this disjuncture lies with the current administrative structures within the ministries of education, whereby the three sub sectors of the administration are physically separated from each other in different locations in the capital. The administrative personnel within each sector appear to rarely co-ordinate their activities in the achievement of common goals. And the reason for this is the central issue in this report; that is, there is no common set of goals.

In the sections which follow, the Teaching and Learning Practice aspect of the Schema is analysed. It will be argued that the development of national goals of education is the central starting point for an educational framework. From these goals flow a logical sequence of issues requiring both pedagogic and operational responses.

(Section 6: Stage 4 of this report deals with the Teaching and Pedagogy Cluster of the Schema. Section 6: Stage 5 of this report deals with the Operational and Governance Cluster of the Schema.)

The Teaching and Pedagogy questions to be asked, and answered, are:

- what is worth knowing? (curriculum),
- how can this be achieved? (pedagogy) and then
- how will it be known if the goals have been achieved? (assessment).

An effective educational framework does not start with assessment procedures. It is our view, as outlined in detail in Report 2, that in several countries in the Pacific region the external examinations drives the curriculum and therefore the pedagogy. The tendency to compartmentalise and separate the three components of teaching and learning and the lack of an educational administrator to cohere the components can only exacerbate issues of social injustice and social fragmentation.

Teaching and Learning Practices Cluster

(i) Pedagogic Practices

The first component of the Teaching and Learning Practices aspect of the Schema for the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning social harmony is Pedagogic Practices .

The enhancement of social harmony and cultural tolerance in schools and classrooms requires a policy framework which encourages teachers to adapt centrally-developed materials to local contexts. The research team has been very impressed with the creative yet purposeful teaching and learning pedagogies employed by some teachers, even in the most remote locations. The common feature of these teachers was that they were able to clearly articulate their goals, had a vision about what pedagogies would suit their students and at the same time connected these strategies to the formal requirements of the examinations.

The enhancement of national cohesion and social harmony in schools requires a range and combination of pedagogic practices which promote understandings, skills, values and social action. An active learner, like an active citizen, is one who engages with the curriculum. A policy framework can enshrine these approaches in curriculum statements and in syllabuses. The role of the examination is then to offer opportunities to students to practise these skills, understandings and values. The role of the teacher in an environment which encourages flexibility in planning, is to link teaching and learning goals with creative and engaging pedagogy. If students are to be informed participants in a democratic society they will need the following skills:

Basic Democratic Skills

- Research skills
- Thinking skills
- Social participation skills
- Communication skills
- Values Clarification skills

In the area of values and dispositions, teachers need to develop a classroom environment in which agreed values are identified, internalised and practiced. Substantive values, for example respect, tolerance, cooperation and social justice, were often mentioned by stakeholders as being central community values. Systematic or explicit teaching and learning of these values is rare.

Pedagogic practices which enhance positive social learning are supported by this policy framework. Some of the teachers interviewed were skilled in the appropriate classroom practices and practices. It is our view that such skilled practitioners should be identified and these teachers be given a professional development role within local clusters of schools, with a view to enhancing pedagogic practices sympathetic to positive social learning.

An effective social cohesion policy recognises that social action is an essential dimension of social education pedagogy because it enables students to be active learners by practising appropriate and relevant social learning, both in the classroom, and outside in the community. Reports 1 & 2 argued that a young person s willingness to consider contributing to the community and to learning values like social harmony, rested heavily on the teaching and learning opportunities created at school. Engagement in community service, meaningful leadership roles for students in school life and students working together with other members of the school community are examples of activities resulting from of this pedagogic approach.

An effective social cohesion policy recognises that the positive disposition towards national cohesion and social tolerance cannot be learned in a knowledge vacuum. Reports 1 and 2 argued that a sensitive and empathetic understanding of local traditions and a sense of belonging are critical pre-conditions to effective social learning. Such learning requires a pedagogy which is culturally sensitive and is knowledgeable and accepting of diverse cultural practices. In turn schools need community involvement, and resources with appropriate teaching and learning materials to support learning of local community (and national) knowledge.

The enhancement of positive social learning can best be achieved in classrooms which have the following characteristics.

Characteristics of Classrooms where Social Learning can Flourish

From the Teachers Perspective:

- Teachers model desired behaviours
- There are high levels of student interest and motivation
- Teaching and learning practices connected to enhancement of national cohesion, democratic participation within cultural diversity and social tolerance
- Principal and teachers model best practice in social learning
- Students are actively involved in learning
- Physical environment of classroom is organised to support social learning
- Learning theory is linked to practice: for example, difference in students learning styles are accommodated
- Assessment is linked to pedagogic practices

A classroom which has the above pedagogic characteristics, will result in a classroom which has the following learning characteristics.

From the Students Perspective:

- Students feel secure, listen to each other, cooperation is valued, and opinions are freely given and received
- Openness of ideas is encouraged through questioning, critical thinking and respect for diversity of views
- Students can develop their decision-making skills
- Diversity of ideas and practice is encouraged.
- New knowledge, skills and values are built on students experiences and interests.
- Learning activities are challenging, cooperative, problem-solving and inclusive

These two lists of classroom characteristics indicate the radical changes in classroom practices many teachers need to undertake if they are to be conducting classes in which social leaning can occur. The changes required represent a major cultural shift for most teachers. Such changes to pedagogy cannot be undertaken in a piecemeal manner. Teachers will urgently need training in these pedagogic practices. Professional development, both pre-service and in-service training, will need to be provided. Selection of key teachers for dissemination of training can be utilised, but all teachers will need familiarisation training. Without this full resourcing, the results will not be achieved.

Some implications of this cultural shift are explored subsequently in this report, in the policy section about administration. (See Section 6: Stage 4, page 24, also Priority 3, p28.)

(ii) Curriculum

The second component of the Teaching and Learning Practices aspect of the Schema for the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning social harmony is Curriculum .

Report 2 examined the national curriculum in both case study countries in terms of its relationship to the enhancement of positive social learning. The syllabus review indicated that much of the current curriculum was obsolete, especially in the context of new nationhood. Much of the curricula had the potential to encourage social learning but they lacked explicit content about local traditional cultural practices. Because of this the curricula also lacked local cultural knowledge outcomes. In fact we argued that the curricula were socially divisive with their emphasis on a narrow content, and on a valuing of cognitive learning related to the examinations. As such, most of what could be called life skills learning was ignored by schools.

Report 2 also indicated the extent of dissatisfaction with the current curriculum by many community stakeholders. The conclusion reached by the research team was that there is an urgent need to review the current curriculum in both countries. In particular, in this report, we argue that with the articulation of national goals of education, educators and the community have an opportunity to both broaden the curriculum while setting its parameters. The following is a checklist of the characteristics of curriculum delivery for enhancing the learning and modelling of social tolerance and cohesion.

Characteristics of socially cohesive curriculum delivery

- National goals and priorities are reflected directly in curriculum
- The curriculum is inclusive in terms of gender, disabilities, ethnicity
- The curriculum is child centred aesthetic, intellectual, physical, social, moral (When this is the case, so-called youth issues , such as unemployment, birth control, AIDS, conflict resolution, social relationships are explicitly incorporated in the formal curriculum.)
- Schools are given flexibility, within a national framework, to localise curriculum: for example, the use of vernacular languages, local cultural traditions are incorporated
- Mechanisms are in place to effectively monitor delivery of curriculum and its effectiveness
- Information Technologies is integrated into the curriculum
- The curriculum is delivered in a number of different modes, including Distance Education
- A comprehensive curriculum should include; academic, vocational and rural strands

The research team believes that the newly emerged nations of the Pacific region have a great opportunity to re-conceptualise the curriculum of schools outside of the western body of knowledge tradition. This is very exciting opportunity to develop curriculum patterns to specifically suit local national aspirations, even recognising the impact of globalisation. We consider the following areas of knowledge might form a useful curriculum.

Curriculum Areas

- Environmental education
- Citizenship education
- Religion and Society
- Expressive and Creative Arts
- Physical and Health Education
- Vocational and Rural training
- Culture and Language
- Science and Technology
- Maths and Society

Teaching and Learning Practices Cluster

(iii) Assessment

The third and final component of the Teaching and Learning Practices aspect of the Schema for the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning social harmony is Assessment .

Drawing on the fieldwork in the two case study countries, it was reported in Reports 1 & 2 that the current practices of assessment are socially divisive. In brief, the argument was often made by policymaker stakeholders that the role of the national examinations is to allocate scarce places in secondary schools in accordance to the extent of available funding. It purported to achieve this goal by assessing the learning of the students. However practitioner stakeholder views on the dominant role of the exams indicated negative personal and educative outcomes resulted from such a culling process.

Assessment can come in many forms: Exams, diagnostic and summative teacher assessment, peer, group and self-assessment. What one wishes to assess will determine the kind of assessment applied to a given student cohort at any time. There are a number of essential principles which apply to the use of assessment. The effect of the form of an assessment on the learning, undertaken in preparation for the assessment, should not be overlooked. The researchers believe that the type of question asked (or anticipated) in any assessment will determine the nature of the learning that takes place. The principles of assessment listed below should be considered in the development of an assessment policy framework. They are especially important in the development of a curriculum for social tolerance and cohesion, because assessment of such learning can never be achieved solely by the use of exams, not even if they were reasonably connected to the whole of a curriculum.

Principles of Assessment

- Assessment practices define what is valued in the school curriculum and influence a student s motivation to learn
- Competitive forms of assessment give limited information to students, teachers and parents
- Competitive assessment limits meaningful long term learning
- Assessment practices must reflect the full range of goals and approaches to teaching and learning knowledge, skills and values
- The use of criterion-based assessment processes linked to student learning outcomes is an effective strategy to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum
- Students should be involved in setting goals and means of assessment
- Continuing (formative) assessment as well as summative assessment strategies should be used in order to achieve goals of social justice.
- Reporting to parents should connect to national goals, articulate assessment strategies and focus on student learning, including social learning.

That teachers who monitor and evaluate student learning in a formative manner, cannot assess their students learning in context of the classroom, is a serious weakness in current education policy. The sorts of goals associated with the enhancement of social harmony and other values can best be developed in the classroom, for it is here that a more varied range of assessment processes can be used. This is not to suggest that only internal assessment processes be used. Examinations can be useful for the measurement of certain types of goals.

This proposed policy framework has as its focus the appropriate assessment of social learnings, and skills associated with social learning with a social tolerance, cohesion and harmony agenda.

SECTION 6: ARTICULATION OF THE SCHEMA: STAGE FOUR

Introductory Comments to a Governance Policy to Promote Social Learning

The third aspect of the Schema addresses Operational and Governance Policy. The opportunities for schools to promote social harmony depends on a sensitive and cohesive rapport between the three major decision-making agencies schools themselves, the local community and the education administration. These three agencies are responsible for the implementation of national government policy.

It is the view of the research team that all three agencies, in their own ways, currently offer few opportunities for broad representation of their constituents in decision-making processes. Reports 1 & 2 examined the culture of decision making processes in the three locations, and noted:

- The centralist policy of the national ministries of education in the two case study countries.
- The minimalist role given to provincial education centres to develop policies and activities for their local communities.
- The lack of opportunities or encouragement for principals and teachers to engage in decision making at the local school level.
- The lack of opportunities for local communities to participate in policy-making decisions.
- The lack of opportunities for students to engage in meaningful decision making about their interests and needs at school.

This policy framework for the promotion of democratic participation and community well being involves the three decision-making agencies in the Schema: Community, Schools and Administration. Those three areas of involvement are put forward for discussion. The following text deals with those areas of involvement, based on a commitment to the concept of **engagement** as the key, framing element.

Operational and Governance Policy Cluster

(i) Community

The first component of the Operational and Governance Policy aspect of the Schema in the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning about social harmony is Community .

Report 2: Operational Assessment, of this Social Tolerance Project, referenced research into, and provided an analysis of, factors contributing to students positive dispositions towards participating in their communities. It was asserted that the most important factor contributing to positive and efficacious attitudes towards community participation was the extent to which schooling offered them opportunities to practice citizenship. Examples of such activities are: community or social service, contributing directly to discussion, spearheading (designing and leading) social initiatives in their community. The creation of these social learning opportunities rests with the goodwill of the other participants and the extent of the interaction between school and the community.

In a public education system which reflects the aspirations of the community (be it local or regional), the following characteristics will be evident:

- The community and community groups will participate in setting goals and policy frameworks for their local school.
- The community will be equitably represented on policy-making committees at all levels: local provincial and national.
- Schools will recognise the value of community participation by inviting appropriate individuals and groups to share their knowledge and experience with their school community.
- The community will initiate opportunities for students to gain experience in the life of the community - including the gaining of work experience.
- Schools will be physically located within the community they serve, and be easily accessible to it.

Some examples of how communities can be involved in the operation and governance of schools include:

- Membership of School Councils, with responsibility to develop local School Charters or mission statements.
- Representation on Provincial Education Office policy-making committees
- Involvement in school and classroom activities as teacher aides.
- Initiating and promoting community knowledge in school curricula.
- Community representation on funding allocation decision-making bodies.

Schools are social institutions. The values of a school reflect major points of agreement within the school community. These become the key core goals around which the school, community and students can unite and act in concert. *Report 2: Operational Assessment,* of this Social Tolerance Project, argued the case for all members of the school community coming together to articulate values and goals in a school charter or mission statement. This public document would spell out what is expected of the different members of the school community, based on the agreed common values and goals. These community activities would focus on the promotion of social cohesion, democratic decision-making and the social well being of communities.

Operational and Governance Cluster

(ii) Schools

The second component of the Operational and Governance Policy aspect of the Schema in the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning about social harmony is Schools .

The way schools organise themselves reflects the values and beliefs the stakeholders consider important. The type of school organisation has a strong influence on students perception of school and their learning. Schools will have diverse needs and different points of entry in this review process. Some schools may only want to review and fine-tune policy and practices that they believe have been operating effectively for some years. Other schools may wish to undertake a fuller review of what they are currently doing and develop new policy which better suits their present population and needs. Alternatively there may be a pressing problem that the school needs to address. All require a process of review of social learning in the school.

Whatever the motivation for considering social learning as an area of the school program requiring a review, the following list of steps provides guidelines for a school-based process:

- Identification of social learning as a high priority focus for the school.
- Data is then to be collected from the three populations at the local level:
    - (i) Students: (Eg: on their feelings about social connectedness)
    - (ii) Teachers: (Eg: on their perceptions of how they are valued at the school)
    - (iii) Parents: (Eg: their perceptions of emotional and physical safety in the school)
- An analysis of current school policies and existing practices, resulting in the identification of special social understandings, skills and values that the school has to focus on.
- Action to implement the required plan is then taken by the whole school community.

When a social learning review process and action plan have been effectively implemented a school has the following characteristics.

Characteristics of Schools which Inculcate Social Learning

- Schools are models of democratic practices
- Parents, teachers and students are actively engaged in decision making
- Schools utilise a community governance model of organisation
- The principal provides leadership in developing a democratic model of governance.
- Schools have a whole school plan to enhance social harmony
- Schools develop a charter, or mission statement, which reflects goals of social harmony
- Schools themselves develop a policy/curriculum framework which reflect community and national aspirations.
- Schools have policies which promote a safe, caring, pleasant environment
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning of social learning is regularly monitored
- School curriculum is comprehensive and/or specialist in connecting to the local community
- Schools promote social harmony by the use of community/national symbols eg flags

Operational and Governance Policy Cluster

(iii) Administration

The third component of the Operational and Governance Policy aspect of the Schema in the development of a policy framework for teaching and learning about social harmony is Administration .

It could be argued that the effectiveness of an education system is only as good as its administrative structures. In Report 1, stakeholders in both case study countries were very critical of both the management style of the educational administration and the politicisation of the whole area of education. Frequent comments were made about the inability of practitioner stakeholders to communicate with appropriate administrative personnel in the central offices, so that even the most basic teaching and learning requirements like paper and, in some cases, teacher payment, were not received. Other comments from community stakeholders reflected a growing concern about the impact of the volatile political climate and therefore changing key policy makers.

Regardless of the size of the education system, educational administrators are engaged in a very complex organisation. The organisational orientation of an educational administration is a critical factor both in creating a management environment conducive to enhancing social harmony and participatory democratic practices among stakeholders and in providing leadership in developing policies within the boundaries of national goals of education. Some of the ways in which administrative policy can impact on broader social issues include:

- Setting aims and goals for the system and devising ways of monitoring performance
- Establishing relationships between schools and the central office.
- Facilitating co-operation between educational institutions.
- Utilising the main agent in schools, the principal, as a conduit for administration policy.
- Facilitating the provision of resources to schools
- Establishing policies and procedures for assessment of students and credentialing of teachers.
- Providing for professional development of teachers
- Certifying curriculum

It is the view of the research team that the current administrations in the two case study countries do not have a coordinated administrative structure which facilitates the implementation of policy within a clearly articulated philosophical framework. There is a need for a whole system approach to youth issues and not just schooling. Given the limited funding available to the administration, there is a need to devolve some of the policy responsibilities to local provincial education offices and to individual school communities. A series of recommendations will be discussed in a later section dealing with national priorities.

Conclusion to the Articulation of the Schema for this Educational Framework

This completes the analysis and articulation of the Schema.

Three Priorities were identified by the researchers as those, if taken together, are most likely to result in the education systems in Pacific countries positively contributing to social cohesion in their societies. An articulation and analysis of the Three Priorities follows in Section 7.

SECTION 7: PROPOSED NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Priority One:
A NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY PLAN

It is our view that the key to establishing a set of national priorities for education is the development of a national youth strategy plan. We believe that the many comments from stakeholders and the observations made during the field-work indicate that there is a lack of a co-ordinated approach to youth. Formal education is but one component of a youth policy. In both countries many non-government agencies were making a significant contribution to some aspects of education for young people. Likewise in both countries there does not appear to be a co-ordinated policy to address the issues facing those many young people who do not continue schooling beyond the primary school level.

The demographic figures focusing on the high proportion of youth as a percentage of the total population in the two case study countries can be reflected in similar figures from other countries in the Pacific region. We have not uncovered any evidence to suggest that this trend might change in the near future. It is our belief that the development of a school based education policy framework needs to take into account the total youth population. The low retention rates of young people through secondary schools clearly indicate a higher proportion of youth outside of the education system. Schooling for young people beyond Grade 6 is not a reality, so any policy process with a focus on social justice needs to consider educational opportunities in non-formal settings. Schools are obviously not the only agency for learning, yet there appears to be few systemic opportunities in the two case study countries for youth education. In general, most opportunities have been developed by non-government organisations, such as the churches.

The enhancement of social harmony in a community relies on a commitment to the wellbeing of all sections of the community. An educational policy framework needs to be encompassed within a broader national youth policy framework. Our discussions with many young people indicate that they have a wide range of interests outside of formal classroom learning. These interests include physical, aesthetic, spiritual, social and cognitive experiences. At present formal schooling only offers some of these experiences.

Some examples of components, currently mostly missing, and which would enhance social harmony and national youth well-being within a broad national youth policy framework include:

Possible Components of a Youth Policy Framework

- Opportunities for student decision-making experiences in all learning contexts, for example, Student Representative Councils, membership on education committees.
- Development of a National Youth Parliament system
- Inclusion of youth issues, however controversial, within all educational experiences.
- Community Service as a component of all educational experiences
- A national sport and physical education policy
- Rural education training centres linked to Provincial Educational Offices and driven by local demand and including work experience.
- The provision of vocational training both within existing schools and outside in specialist institutions. Development of an articulated vocational education system based on generic vocational competencies, and firmly focussed on realistic choices of vocation.

Priority Two:
A REVIEW OF CURRICULUM

We have argued in all three reports that schools provide the single common experience for the citizens of a country. We have also argued that curriculum is socially constructed and therefore has embodied in it values and assumptions about teaching and learning as well as broader issues like national aspirations. The construction of curriculum should clearly represent the current goals and future hopes of communities. Communities own the curriculum, therefore community consultation about what makes up a curriculum is a critical strategy to enhance social harmony.

The review of curriculum is a time consuming process. It can also be a costly process if stakeholders in the community call for amendments. The overall impression we have received during this project is that there is considerable dissatisfaction with the current curriculum in both of the case study countries. It is interesting that stakeholders in both countries have highlighted aspects of social learning as the component of curriculum they most urgently want to amend. It is our conclusion that the focus of this project the promotion of social harmony and citizenship is the very focus desired by communities in both countries.

The strategies to review curriculum are complex and it is our view that there is not sufficient personnel or resources currently allocated in both countries to carry out the task. We therefore are arguing that this needs to become a national priority with appropriate funding. This may mean taking some funding from other areas of the budget. It might mean seeking foreign funding support for this specific task, provided the ownership of the activity rests with local curriculum developers.

A review of the curriculum in social learning could use the audit of curriculum as outlined in Report 2 of this project. It is not being suggested that only this area of curriculum be reviewed, but rather that social learning should be both an area of study in itself and an over-arching perspective across the whole school curriculum. This is clearly the desire of stakeholders in both countries. We are not suggesting, however, that the nature of the social learning curriculum will be the same for both countries.

The boxed list which follows indicates a range of teaching and learning issues associated with social education. It suggests areas of curriculum knowledge, appropriate pedagogies and connections to core values or national goals of education. It suggests that the enhancement of social harmony and citizenship can be effectively and systematically incorporated into the school curriculum. It also recognises, as pointed in Report 2, the need to give students opportunities to practice citizenship activities.

The element not explicitly referenced in the list is the relationship between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. We are of the belief that appropriate assessment activities can be developed to assess social learning. External examinations are generally not the most appropriate strategy, so we are promoting the idea of more school-based assessment.

The interconnectedness of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment is demonstrated in the Schema and underpins the whole of the policy framework we have devised in this report. It also underpins the Three Priorities we have identified as essential to the achievement of a curriculum which espouses Social Tolerance, Cohesion and Harmony.

Curriculum Outcomes:

(When Social Tolerance, Cohesion and Harmony are a Curriculum s Learning Outcomes)

Broad Understandings About Society

Through the social education program, especially one which seeks to enhance Social Tolerance, Cohesion and Harmony, students should progressively achieve an understanding of the following:

The way societies are grouped and structured
The ways different societies have of fulfilling basic needs
The ways decisions are made and enacted; and the influences on decision-making
The ways widely-held beliefs and values influence societies and groups within societies
The ways in which people interact and the purposes for which they interact
The ways in which there are elements of change and continuity in human affairs
The ways in which there is interaction between natural and social settings
The ways in which different societies maintain and pass on their culture

It is the view of the authors that these understandings about society should form the basis of social learning in schools. They embody understandings, skills and values, all of which are directed towards cultural sensitivities and social harmony. Some are found in existing curriculum documents, but their impact seems weak and fragmented.

SECTION 7: PROPOSED NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Priority Three:
A DEVOLUTION OF POLICY MAKING PROCESSES

We have argued in thus report that one of the key elements in the development of an educational policy framework for a public education system which is directed at enhancing social harmony is community ownership of the policy and the decision making processes. We have identified that the decision-making traditions of some cultures do not actively support this approach to policy formation. Thus the promotion of social harmony and citizenship as a focus of education policy can only originate from those stakeholders who already have the policy-making authority. In this instance, this is the central ministry of education. Countries that aspire to democratic models of governance are willing to use the ballot box to gain and use community support for policy for a range of issues. The difference in the education area we believe rests with the absence of a national set of goals of education. As a result, communities are unable to translate broad national policy into local practices.

Arguments have already been made in this report for the need for changes in administrative structure and procedures to promote a more public acceptance of, and modelling of, desired social learning outcomes. What follows is a summary of the principles which we see embedded in the process of moving from a centralised policy making process to a school community based framework. Indicative initial strategies have been identified as follows:

- Change the name of the Ministry of Education to the Department of Education Employment, Training, & Youth Affairs (DEETYA), so enhancing a unified national system of education and approach to youth affairs
- Enhance transparency and accountability in education via triennial school reviews
- Establish performance reviews of administrative staff
- School principals be charged with establishing local school policy in conjunction with local school communities.
- Key principals given responsibility to oversee a cluster of principals in the processes of school policy formulation.
- Provincial Education Offices be charged with much greater responsibility in cluster professional development of teachers and in initiating community participation in education.
- The Curriculum Development Centres be restructured to include a representative board of management NGOs, Teacher s College, PEO, teachers, administration, so that the production of curriculum materials reflect the aspirations and values of the community.
- Creation of a Distance Education section within the CDC to facilitate more equitable access to educational resources.
- Leading teachers be given time release to develop curriculum materials which reflect assessment processes and pedagogies embedded in national goals of education..
- Teachers College management be linked to the CDC, Ministry of Education administration, NGOs and be developed as centres of excellence in pedagogies to enhance social learning.
- Examination papers examinations be developed by teachers with time release, with a leading teacher to ensure each paper accurately reflects national goals of education.

The over-riding objective in this process is to bring the key education agencies together and to broaden the management representation in each institution. The management concept underpinning the devolutionary process is based on modelling active democratic engagement in decision-making.

The effectiveness of an administration can be measured by the existence of the following characteristics:

Characteristics of an Effective Education Administration

- Articulated purposes and goals which are clear
- Leadership which had high standards of academic and administrative skill
- Locates and holds a dedicated and qualified staff
- The articulation to staff and on paper that the system will deliver and fulfil expectations
- Early identification of teaching and learning issues within the system
- Pays attention to the synergy between administration, school and the community
- Accountability with regard to all processes and outcomes which fall within the ambit of its responsibilities.

In conclusion, an effective educational administration is one which, having acknowledged the importance of local involvement in the construction of national goals, then establishes processes which will ensure local communities have the power to implement the framework within the context of that local situation.

CONCLUSION

Concluding Comments

> *A strong, interactive classroom community encompasses democratic practices, honours individual differences, and helps children understand that within any group there are many ways of looking at the world.* (Bryant, 1999)

The core purpose of schooling is to provide a quality education which ensures that students are well prepared for life after school. All school processes should ultimately be supportive of improving student learning for their future and that of their society.

Stakeholders interviewed for this study considered the acquisition by young people in school of the following social attributes to be an important social goal; for themselves and their society.

- Self-confidence
- Self-esteem
- Self-efficacy
- Intrinsic motivation to learn and contribute
- Optimism about the future
- Social competence
- Social responsibility
- Equity

Many factors influence the likelihood that students will achieve desirable social goals such as these. Some factors have to do with the individual, the family and the wider community, and these factors may be completely outside the school s sphere of influence. There is a positive association between students social learning and skills and their school experiences.

The authors of this policy framework assert, and have sought to demonstrate throughout this report, that a variety of ways exists for schools to enhance students social learning. Research has found that students abilities to make new friends, form positive peer relationships and behave appropriately in school are important to school success.

So it is essential that schools be a *positive* factor in a student s social learning. Schools can play a significant and positive role by providing students with opportunities and encouragement to achieve these social attributes and also to achieve the broader social goals. Social learning has significance during and long after a student s time at school.

A positive and supportive school environment is the main way schools have of enhancing the social development of students. But this supportive environment can only come about when all stakeholders policy makers, administrators, principals, teachers, students and parents work together towards common goals. The three reports in this project have indicated that the enhancement of social cohesion is recognised by all stakeholders as a high priority area for schools. What is now needed is a systematic action plan in order to secure the future of democratic participation in schools.

This Policy Framework, with its three policy proprieties, is the authors proposed plan of action.

REFERENCES

Begler, E., Global Cultures :The First Steps Towards Understanding , in Social Education, Vol.62, No.5, 1998, USA.

Bryant, C. J., Building a Sense of Community among Young Students with Student-Centred Activities . In The Social Studies, Vol.1, No.3. May/June 1999. USA.

Carlson, H., & Holm, C., Diversity and Global Studies: Elementary Children s Investigations . In Social Studies and the Young Learner, Vol. 11, No.3, Jan/Feb. 1999. USA.

Mellor, S., Prior, W., & Withers, G., Report 2: School Operational Assessment, Report for the South Pacific Social Tolerance and Cohesion Project, to the World Bank, August 2001, Melbourne, Australia.

Prior, W., Mellor, S., & Withers, G., Report 1: Stakeholders Assessment, Report for the South Pacific Social Tolerance and Cohesion Project, to the World Bank, July 2001, Melbourne, Australia.

Scott, E., Tolerance Friend or Foe . In The Age, 21 July 2001, Melbourne, Australia.

ATTACHMENT 1

Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion through Education
Workshop Goals
National Goals of Education for Vanuatu for the C21st

At the reflective workshop on Friday 22 June, three groups of participants developed the following sets of national goals. The goals were prioritised by the three groups. The data which follows has been taken from the groups report sheets.

Workshop Group 1

1. Each school should have policy and guidelines to address the goals.
2. Review and rewrite the curriculum to include civic knowledge outcomes.
3. To train the teachers to be innovative in implementing the revised curriculum, through pre-service and in-service training courses.
4. To formally include the community in curriculum development and evaluation.
5. To equip all students with competencies to enable them to contribute to their societies after formal education.
6. To encourage school administration to use extra-curricular activities to achieve legitimate learning outcomes.
7. To conduct a dual evaluation of teachers and students learning outcomes.

Workshop Group 2

1. Equality of Access -
   - buildings and facilities
   - opportunities right across society

•

2 Education Equity
   - formal / informal
   - gender
   - skill
   - resources / buildings

•

3 Quality Education -
   - relevance to our society
   - trained teachers
   - relevant to present / future changes

4 Community Participation
   - literate society

5 Environmentally / Culturally sensitive
   - natural resources
   - cultural activities
   - aesthetic values
   - sustainability

6 A Holistic Ni-Vanuatu

- Spiritually
- Culturally
- Physically
- Mentally / knowledge
- Participative

Workshop Group 3

1. To provide Universal Basic Education to all Ni-Vanuatu children regardless of

    - Gender
    - Religion
    - Language
    - Location
    - Ability

2. Provide and improve relevant curriculum which enhances

    - Cultural
    - Spiritual
    - Economic
    - Social development needs of Vanuatu

3. Delivery of quality education across the whole system.

4. To maintain, protect and preserve different languages and cultures as part of our national heritage and to promote bi-lingualism / multi-lingualism.

5. To provide and encourage an equitable system of education.

6. To encourage partnership in education so as to maintain sustainability for the expansion of the education system.

Workshop Leaders:

Warren Prior
Suzanne Mellor

Port Vila
22 June 2001

ATTACHMENT 2

(Warren Prior, Project Director of the World Bank Pacific Islands' Social Tolerance Project, developed these national goals for discussion by Vanuatu Ministry officials, at their request. The goals derive from the national goals developed during the Vanuatu workshop, but they have a generic appropriateness and application.)

Possible National Goals of Education for the Twenty-first Century

Rationale for Goal 1:

The purpose of schooling is to assist young people to develop knowledge, skills and values which will enable them to contribute to the community as informed, active, participatory and socially responsible citizens.

Goal 1: Education is a community responsibility and policy and practices need to be determined by the community. Schools need to be places where relevant, flexible, socially just and effective programs are developed and delivered in order to assist young people to move along the pathway to becoming contributing members of their communities.

Rationale for Goals 2-4

Vanuatu is a newly created democratic nation in which the forces of old, namely, the impact of colonialism and the traditions and customs of its peoples, are now being confronted to determine the shape of its future.

Goal 2: Education policies and practices will need to clearly enhance young peoples understandings of their cultural heritage, the impact of colonialism and their role in shaping the future of Vanuatu in a global setting.

Goal 3: Young people will need to develop knowledge, skills and values about their understandings of these forces and will need to be critically active in participating as future citizens of Vanuatu. In particular, schools will need to encourage skills in analysis and problem solving.

Goal 4: In the support of a democratic community, schools will need to encourage students to be active citizens both within and outside the immediate school community. In particular, schools will need to be democratic institutions, and students will need to have opportunities for developing decision making skills, developing skills and values of self-confidence, self esteem, and commitment to personal and collective excellence.

Rationale for Goals 5-6

One feature of globalisation is that successful nations of the future will be those nations who accept, but shape, the opportunities that globalisations brings to both schooling and nations as a whole. However Vanuatu is not able to confront these forces without considering an even newer force, that of globalisation.

Goal 5: Education systems will need to invest in the enhancement of technological understandings, skills and values of both the bureaucracy and school practices. The ability to critically analyse the social impact of technologies and to preserve its balance within the maintainance of traditional customs will be essential.

Goal 6: Schooling should develop students abilities to critically analyse the media of globalisation. In particular, schools will need to develop courses in media analysis.

Rationale for Goals 7-11

Vanuatu, as a nation of many islands, has a unique and diverse cultural heritage which will continue to face pressures from within and without the country.

Goal 7: The school system will need to provide opportunities for young people to enhance their intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, moral and aesthetic development in supporting the preservation of Vanuatu s traditional customs. In particular, schools will need to develop courses in the creative arts, physical well-being and civic traditions.

Goal 8: In recognising and valuing cultural diversity, a national language policy for schools will need to be developed. This will need to done with wide community consultation. In particular, outcomes of this policy will include the production of appropriate teaching and learning resources, the appropriate training of teachers and the valuing of bi-lingual/multi-lingual practices.

Goal 9: Diversity of cultures brings with it opportunities to create diverse schooling structures. Building on the traditional values of respect and social justice, schooling must provide equal access and equal opportunities for success for all young people, regardless of gender, location, ability, age, religion and language. In particular, education must provide safe, supportive learning environments for all young people from age 5 to age 14, within a number of school structures, including vocational schools, community schools, non-boarding secondary schools.

Goal 10: Education systems, while celebrating cultural diversity and the possibility of a number of cultural identities, will recognise and promote a socially cohesive framework of shared values.

Goal 11: The impact of the nation of islands will be recognised in the equitable distribution of resources and facilities across the nation. It may be necessary at times to adopt a positive discrimination policy to redress past inequities. Schools will also need to have some discretion and flexibility in developing their individual school goals to suit their local communities, but within the broad national framework.

Rationale for Goals 12-14

Vanuatu, in the foreseeable future, will continue to rely on some forms of aid from external sources. Accountability and demonstrated effectiveness will continue to be key criteria for future donor support.

Goal 12: All stakeholders in the education community need to held responsible and accountable for their policies and practices. For students, this means that they will need to be encouraged to value learning and to be supportive of life long learning. For schools teachers and principals, they will need to be both fairly paid as public servants in recognition of their critical role and to be also regularly assessed for the effectiveness of their performance. Administrators at all levels will likewise need to be accountable for, and transparent in, their policies and practices. Mechanisms will need to be established to formalise these processes.

Goal 13: The current examination system is socially divisive, ineffective as a measure of the goals of schooling and the future learning performance of students, and is open to inappropriate influences. The Grade 6 examination will be abolished within 3 years, allowing all students to continue schooling in some appropriate form until at least Year 8. Testing for literacy will be introduced at the completion of Grade 6 but only as a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning **of literacy and for providing data for future remedial action if necessary.** A new examination will be developed for Year 8 to directly assess the national goals of education.

Goal 14: In order to assist the majority of young people who will, in the foreseeable future, return to their village communities after completing Year 8, a set of generic key competencies will be developed for use in schools, particularly in Years 7 and 8. These competencies will assist students in the transition back to their communities and will also be important for those students who will continue in formal education. These competencies underpin the new Year 8 examination.

ATTACHMENT 3:

Solomon Islands Provincial Community Educational Consultations

Executive Summary:

This paper describes how a broad cross-section of parents; teachers, education administrators and community leaders of Choiseul and Western Solomons believe their children and all learners should be looked after in a holistic approach to education and human resource development. It proposes significant changes to traditional perceptions of education and escribes ways and means Choiseul and Western States can adopt to improve access and standards.

It describes a concept of basis education that can ensure access for all to secondary education and it proposes a framework within which all stakeholders in education the whole community of Parents, Teachers, Churches, National & State government, Commerce and Industry and Civic Service Organisations (formerly known as NGO s) can help create continuous learning opportunities for all ages.

It recommends a major shift in the locus of control of education form the National Government to the State Government but takes this further by insisting that all stakeholders including international agencies and friendly countries take special initiatives to support Education and HRD.

It makes the case for a special focus on science and technology, on teacher education, on language and culture in schools and for careful attention to be devoted to good citizenship and Christian education. It describes how the private sector, which contributes to and benefits from all education endeavours, can be encouraged and enables to contribute and directly to ensure the States can accomplish their educational policy goals and objectives.

Parents will always expect the best possible for their children and communities must always work towards a better future. The challenges of the 21st century will be met by aiming high and by raising standards in this one sector that is at once the platform and foundation from which society constructs and maintains all its endeavours.

This paper draws on the understanding the Choisuel and Western Provinces will soon becomes autonomous states within a unites Solomon islands that is also restructuring its government systems and institutions to recognise new and diverse realities that all Solomon Islanders now live with.

Choiseul and Western Solomons have a proud history of being at the forefront in educational endeavour and performance thanks to the early involvement of Churches and the initiative of community leaders in years past. However because of our commitment to national unity, our advantages position has been eroded over the years.

Today, the Choiseul and Western community is in agreement that we now must use more of our own resources to look after our children and ensure they obtain a quality basic education that twill sustain their livelihood in the years to comes.

Our communities are prepared to make their contribution, out Churches are as committed as they always have been and our leaders have spoked up forcefully to give our human resources the quality education and training that they deserve.

General Aims of State Education

In order to reap the advantages of an education system that we adopt, our region should set specific aims of education. Goal setting is a fundamental strategy in education because it can drive community and individuals to work towards achieving their desired goals during their lifetime. Education as a process must equip all citizens with appropriate knowledge and skills so that they can develop to their full potential and participate actively in the social, political, educational and economical development. All opportunities must be provided to students so that they can develop their physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual being, irrespective of political, religious affiliations, genders or ethnicity.

It should be the aim of our Education system to provide students with knowledge and skills that are useful and applicable to our region. Education as a process should aim to present the knowledge and skills within the context of Solomon Islands activities, technologies and materials. In achieving this aim, Education must fulfil two major functions. One is to provide basic education for all citizens of Choiseul and Western Solomons. The other is to provide opportunities, which will allow individuals to develop their knowledge base and skills to their full potential so that they can become responsible members of society and have a full range of opportunities in later life.

- Recognising that Education has specific contributions to make to the life of individuals, the aims of Education in our region are:
- To provide opportunities which will recognise the learning needs of the child
- To provide life-long learning needs of adults of all ages
- To provide learning opportunities to individuals of all ages so that they can develop to their full potential.
- To help children grow up and live happily and successfully in their social, geographic and cultural environment
- To enable individuals to express concern and responsibility for their environment
- To provide opportunities to individuals so that they expand their ability to think critically and creatively, to reason logically and to apply their skills and knowledge to new situations
- To enable learners to interact successfully with the community, regional and world markets
- To enable individuals to acquire knowledge and skills which will enable them to participate actively in the social and economic development of their community, state and country and thus improve their standard of living
- To provide an opportunity for those who wish to further their studies to higher levels of education.

For learning to be considered educational , it has to have value for the community and has to be considered by the community to be worthwhile .

Education becomes meaningful to individuals and society when good and valuable results are gained. If learning results in bad results, it may not be regarded as education . It is imperative that members of society understand the end product of education and its essence to society. Education as a process should provide young people with the basic foundation from which they can continue their learning and interact successfully in an adult world.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC REPRODUCTION RELEASE

I. Document Identification:

Title: Pacific Islands Project :Promoting Social Tolerance and Cohesion Through Education
Report 1 : Stakeholders' Assessment
Report 2 : Operational Assessment
Report 3 : An Educational framework for the Promotion of Social Cohesion and Democratic Participation in Schools.

Author: Warren Prior, Suzanne Mellor, Graeme Withers

Corporate Source: Deakin University (Australia) &
Australian Council for Educational Research (Australia)

Publication Date: September 2001

II. Reproduction Release:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please check one of the following three options and sign the release form.

__X__ Level 1 - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) and paper copy.

____ Level 2A - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only.

____ Level 2B - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no option is marked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

Sign Here: "I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries."

Signature: Warren Prior

Position: Senior Lecturer in Education

Printed Name: Warren Prior

Organization: Deakin University

Address: Deakin University, Faculty of Education, 221 Burwood highway, Burwood

RC023893

3125, Victoria, AUSTRALIA.

Telephone No: (03) 9244 6413

Date: 27 February, 2003.

III. Document Availability Information (from Non-ERIC Source):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price per copy: Quantity price:

IV. Referral of ERIC to Copyright/Reproduction Rights Holder:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please complete the following:

Name:

Address:

V. Attach this form to the document being submitted and send both to:

Velma Mitchell, Acquisitions Coordinator
ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
P.O. Box 1348
1031 Quarrier Street
Charleston, WV 25325-1348

Phone and electronic mail numbers:

800-624-9120 (Clearinghouse toll-free number)
304-347-0467 (Clearinghouse FAX number)
mitchelv@ael.org